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PRESIDENT HOOVER'S precipitate appearance before the Senate on May 31, with his alarmist statements that an emergency had developed which it was his duty to lay before the Senate at once; that the delays of Congress in balancing the budget had "given rise to doubt and anxiety as to the ability of our government to meet its responsibility"; that fears and doubts "foolishly exaggerated in foreign countries had created an entirely unjustified run upon the American dollar from foreign countries," which must be "immediately corrected" or "cause great losses to our people," strikes us as an amazingly misguided action. If it does anything this language will increase the fear and anxiety abroad, will tend further to depreciate the dollar, and will add to the increasing depression and unemployment at home which the President, for once, frankly admits. In one breath he speaks of the entirely unjustified run upon the dollar, and then declares that there would not have been this run if Congress had not failed in its duty to balance the budget properly. Mr. Hoover is thus taking the Ramsay MacDonald position that our monetary unit and our remaining on the gold standard can only be safeguarded by balancing the budget, unwarned by what happened to the British pound after their budget was balanced. The extraordinary confusion of his language can only increase the belief that he is in a state of panic.

THERE CAN BE NO QUESTION that the Mayor of New York proved himself once more a very adroit verbal fencer in his testimony before the Seabury Committee. But it seems to have been forgotten by a good many commentators that what was on trial was not Mr. Walker's qualifications as a lawyer, a wit, or an actor, but his record in office. The Mayor admitted that he received \$246,000 from a joint speculative account with Paul Block, the newspaper publisher, though the Mayor did not put up a dollar, and that he took this large sum in cash and deposited it in his safe at home. He admitted that he had received \$26,000 in bonds from J. A. Sisto, the taxicab financier, also as part of profits in a stock deal in which the Mayor had likewise invested nothing. He admitted the receipt of two other \$10,000 acquisitions as the result of similar "kindnesses." Confronted with evidence that J. Allan Smith, a promoter of the Equitable Coach Company, bought—on the day before the Mayor signed the Equitable franchise—the \$10,000 letter of credit which the Mayor took to Europe in 1927, and that Smith made good a \$3,000 overdraft, Mr. Walker said that Smith was merely the agent who bought the letter of credit with money supplied by the Mayor and his friends. The Mayor's share, he says, was drawn out of the home safe. He did not know why the bus employee made good the overdraft.

JUDGE SEABURY produced evidence to show that in five and a half years \$964,000 had passed through the hands of Russell T. Sherwood, a \$3,000-a-year bookkeeper. The Mayor and Sherwood, according to safe-deposit-company records, have had joint access to a safe-deposit vault. The Mayor admitted that Sherwood wrote checks for him, made his deposits, and paid many of his bills, but disowned him as his authorized agent, and professed inability to account for his disappearance. These are the main points brought out by Judge Seabury's examination. They were brought out after a hundred irrelevancies by the witness, and after the most shameless obstruction by the Tammany members of the committee whenever any question was asked that seemed likely to throw the slightest real light on the Mayor's activities. Whether, when the inquiry is completed, the evidence will be found sufficient to justify the Mayor's removal cannot now be answered. What we have now are extremely implausible explanations of an amazing "generosity" to the Mayor from all sides, the contradiction of even these explanations by other witnesses, and the complete absence in the Mayor of, shall we say, a delicate sense of propriety in his financial transactions.

EVEN THE PRESIDENT of the United States might be expected to be accurate in his statements, especially in replying to the head of the American Society of Civil Engineers of which he is a member. Mr. Hoover himself drafted his communication at his camp on the Rapidan, outlining again his twelve-point relief and credit program for the country and "denouncing"—as the press reported—the society for proposing "a large issue of federal-government

bonds" to finance a "huge expansion" of public works. The trouble is, as the engineers promptly pointed out, that the society in its communication never asked for anything of the kind. Next the President charged his professional brothers with urging further expansion of "public works of remote usefulness." Instead, the society had specifically called only for "necessary and productive" public undertakings. Needless to say, the President's denunciation won the first pages while the engineers' reply was buried on an inside page, and so far we have seen no apology from Mr. Hoover for his misstatements. But the President's blundering did not stop there. In speaking of road construction Mr. Hoover asserted that giving \$132,000,000 to the States for highway construction would directly employ only 35,000 men and indirectly 20,000 more. Last winter Colonel F. S. Greene, the Superintendent of Public Works of the State of New York, got out a table for the benefit of the Legislature which proved that \$132,000,000 would build 3,300 miles of road and would employ 148,500 men. Today prices have changed so that, as shown by bids, this sum would build 3,770 miles of road and employ 169,450 persons. But what is a little difference of 114,450 men to a President when he wants to make a point?

EIGHTEEN MAYORS of the leading Michigan cities, under the chairmanship of Mayor Murphy of Detroit, on May 23 petitioned the President and the Congress for immediate and direct federal relief for the unemployed. They asked for an amendment to the Reconstruction Finance Corporation Act so that it may invest in notes, debentures, bonds, and other obligations of the cities to provide money to overcome delinquent tax obligations and for the refunding of bonds. The mayors also indorsed the proposal of a five-billion-dollar Prosperity Loan for public works. The memorandum runs further: "We strongly urge upon our federal government the dire necessity for immediate action. The financial structures of the municipalities which so far have been bearing the load of this crisis are daily weakening. Social unrest is increasing, and complete collapse and general confusion threaten." Therefore the mayors ask the President and the Congress "to recognize without delay the obligation of the federal government to the municipalities of the nation by prompt legislation that will afford relief." When it is remembered that most of these mayors are Republicans from extremely conservative American manufacturing cities, the significance of this action becomes apparent.

PUBLIC OWNERSHIP OF RADIO in Canada, recommended three years ago by a government commission appointed to inquire into the question, is now about to become a reality. A government-owned company, managed by experts and not by politicians, is to be organized to operate all of the larger stations in the Dominion. Private stations of less than 100-watt power will be permitted to operate in certain localities not fully covered by the government stations. The system will be financed by charging a \$2 annual license fee for each receiving set in use. Extra revenue will come from the sale of advertising time, but because the commission found that private broadcasting "tended more and more to force too much advertising upon the listener," the public-ownership plan will limit the broadcasting of advertisements to 5 per cent of the time of any given program period.

Provincial authorities will be given a definite measure of local autonomy. Not only will they have nine of the twelve seats on the board of the government company, but they will name a broadcasting director for each province, this person to "have full control of the programs broadcast by the station or stations located within the boundaries of the province for which he is responsible." The Canadian scheme, so far as radio listeners in the United States are concerned, has its amusing side. The American broadcasting companies are strongly opposed to the adoption of any similar plan in this country, and the suggestion of a publicly owned radio system here has found no response whatever among Washington officials. Nevertheless, the State Department, with the assent of the Federal Radio Commission, did not hesitate to approve a request from the Canadian government that broadcasting channels be redistributed in order to make the Canadian plan feasible.

THE "DOCTORS' BILL," which provided for the dissemination of birth-control information to physicians who at their discretion might pass it on to their patients, has been unfavorably reported out of committee following the hearings during the third week in May. The vote was 20 to 4 against the bill, and its chances for passage in the House are thereby rendered nil. While we have nothing but praise for Mrs. Sanger's gallant efforts to get the bill through, and while we recognize it as remedial of some of the abuses of our ridiculous contraceptive legislation, it is only just to point out that the bill itself left a great deal to be desired. As with most of our prohibitory legislation, the situation with regard to birth control gets more fantastic each year. Every State has its own particular set of regulations, and these regulations break down at one point or another as occasion demands. It might be fully as realistic and much more logical to press the passage through Congress not of a bill which so definitely limits the dissemination of contraceptive information as does the Hatfield bill, but of one which permits the giving of it, in safe and proper form, to any man or woman who asks for it.

WHAT A CORRESPONDENT for the *Chicago Tribune* calls "state-created misery" has produced a grave situation in New Zealand. There have already been serious riots in Auckland and other cities. Men have been injured, a good deal of property has been damaged, and there is likelihood of further trouble. The Dominion government is having difficulty in feeding the unemployed, whose number is constantly growing. At the same time tax collections are falling off at an alarming rate. The government undertook to provide insurance for the unemployed through a law enacted a year ago, which requires that the jobless work for their relief, but when no work is available, relief is to be given unconditionally. This latter provision has been ignored by the authorities, who are withholding normal assistance from persons for whom no work can be found. Instead, these jobless are being herded into tent colonies, which are reported to be little better than prison camps. There they must live up to the most stringent regulations or go without even the meager fare the government is furnishing. Deserters, or men who refuse to enter the camps, are cut off from all relief. At first it was intended that only single men should be housed in these colonies. Lately, however, others

have been opened for married men. In consequence, most of the workers of New Zealand, including many who still have jobs, are in a state of rebellion. Only the efficiency of the police, operating under the dictatorial public-security law, has thus far prevented widespread disorders.

MILITARY RULE IN CHINA, as elsewhere through the East, is rapidly driving the masses toward revolutionary action. Whole provinces in the interior of China are under the control of the Communists. But these radicals are natives, not agents of Moscow. Workers and peasants, long forced to serve in the armies of the war lords, or to defend with their lives the little property they have against the rapacity of the military brigands, are spontaneously forming their own governments. It is these people who make up the bulk of the red armies which have been organized to combat the military forces employed by Chiang Kai-shek and the Kuomintang to suppress the Communists. Even the soldiers of the Nationalist armies are in sympathy with the revolutionary movement. Not to be overlooked in this connection is the strike of the post-office workers in Shanghai. Agnes Smedley reported in *The Nation* of March 9 that the militant labor movement in the cities "has been almost crushed by the government during the past five years, and thousands of militant workers have been shot, beheaded, or strangled to death. Shanghai . . . with a gangster organization sharing control of the labor movement with the Kuomintang, has been one of the centers of this terror." The post-office strike was undertaken not alone in defiance of the Chiang Kai-shek Government, but of the local labor leaders. It was a purely revolutionary demonstration.

SEEKING TO AROUSE THE PUBLIC to the responsibility of so-called "higher-ups" for concrete situations, a group of Chicago student members of the League for Industrial Democracy on May 14 marched to the residence of Samuel Insull carrying placards bearing pointed slogans. Some of these asked, "Mr. Insull, Why Keep the Kentucky Miners in a Reign of Terror?" and "Will the Forty-three Miners Go to the Electric Chair?" The students were seized by the Chicago police and locked up, and some of them were roughly handled; they are now out on bail awaiting trial. In Philadelphia a group of students led by Maynard Kreuger, instructor in economics at the University of Pennsylvania, undertook to march before the offices of Drexel and Company, a Morgan affiliate and owners of extensive mining property. Placards of the collegiate picketers implied a close connection between the oppression in the mining regions and such financial leaders as J. P. Morgan, Henry Ford, and Andrew Mellon. The fact that the picketers came from such local institutions as Haverford, Swarthmore, and Pendle Hill did not prevent the police in the City of Brotherly Love from breaking up their parade and throwing them into jail. After a refusal of bail and a tirade against radicals at the first hearing, they were later released on bail, but Kreuger will have to stand trial on the charge of inciting to riot. President Gates of the University of Pennsylvania came through handsomely on the side of law and order in the following statement:

The instructor and the students involved in the affair of last Saturday acted as individuals and not as members of the university. In so doing they doubtless were pre-

pared to accept whatever consequences may be involved in their action, in which the university had no part and no responsibility.

This gesture is known as the washing of hands.

NOT ONLY THE WORLD, but the church, do move. Amazing proof of this comes from the Quadrennial General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church which has just been meeting at Atlantic City. By an overwhelming vote the conference voted that Article 231 of the Treaty of Versailles should at once be so altered as no longer to hold the Germans solely responsible for the World War; that no further reparations should be based upon the assumption of sole German guilt; that the United States government move immediately for a new arrangement of war debts based on the present economic situation and on drastic reduction of armaments. It declared for our entrance into the World Court, for the creation of a bureau in the Department of State "to promote education for peace," asked the inclusion of Orientals within the quota immigration laws, demanded that alien pacifists be not barred from citizenship and that the government give to conscientious objectors of the Methodist Episcopal faith the same exemption from military service now granted to the Quakers. Then it petitioned the government to abolish all military training in civilian educational institutions. It voted that "the present industrial order is un-Christian, unethical, and anti-social, because it is largely based on the profit motive, which is a direct appeal to selfishness." After referring to the breakdown of the existing economic order, "with its toll of human want and misery," the conference appealed to "the conscience of mankind to create a social way of life in which all men shall have opportunity to develop their capacities to the fullest possible extent." If this does not set the professional patriots to gnashing their teeth and bemoaning the downfall of America, what could?

JOHN BACH McMASTER was a great scholar, if not the greatest American historian. It is beyond doubt that his eight-volume "A History of the People of the United States" served a most useful purpose in that it presented a detailed record of the day-by-day life of the people. He was a most refreshing change from the conventional historian devoted only to relating wars, diplomacy, and purely political events. As the late Frederick J. Turner discovered the West, so in his historical narrations Professor McMaster discovered the plain American people and recorded their progress with an industry and a wealth of detail which make most valuable reading. He set forth their amusements, their sports, such as they had, their dour Sundays, their travels, their habits, their inhibitions and their lawlessness, their humor, and everything else he could dig out of an endless array of contemporary literature, pamphlets, newspapers, and all the rest. Nor did he forget foreign reactions to our American scene. It has been alleged both that there was too much detail in his work and that anybody else could have done the same thing by grubbing as he did. But no one else had the patience or perseverance or inspiration to do this, and so his eight volumes remain a storehouse of material and have a value that transcends those of his later and more original works. His position among our leading historians and scholars is indisputable.

The Way Out

A GAIN we are receiving letters whose purport is the following: "You are criticizing the Republican Administration, but what else could they have done under the circumstances? What would your program of immediate relief be if you were suddenly installed in the White House?" We have repeatedly stated what we thought should be done to save the existing situation from going from bad to worse. Elsewhere in this issue Henry Hazlitt takes up again two of the most important steps, the radical reduction or abolition of tariffs and the cancelation or drastic reduction of reparations and debts. We are well aware that no Executive could by himself put through this portion of our program, but we know also that a vigorous and effective President could go straight to the country on these issues in so compelling a way as to rouse the voters to his support and force Congress to act. For there is no hope of complete American recovery until Europe is well along the road to economic restoration and health.

As for the farmer, nothing could help him so much as taking off the tariffs. Foreign nations in need of foodstuffs cannot buy our farm products because our tariffs prevent them from paying with the goods they manufacture—for the thousandth time let us point out that nations do not purchase from one another with money, or gold, but only with goods. Again, the tariffs should be taken off every single item which the farmers use in their household or farm economies. The government, instead of wasting millions upon millions in the crazy effort to peg world prices, should devote itself to the question of reducing the cost of transporting and marketing farm products. There could be no better way than to move in the direction of taking over the railroads, welding them into a national whole, and using their earnings, not for the private profit of certain investors, but for improving the system and steadily reducing the bonds issued for the purchase of the roads. That, we admit, lies in the distance, whereas tariffs can be reduced immediately. Yet the mere fact that the government was moving in the direction we have indicated would give encouragement to the farmers and to the security-holders of the railroads, most of whom now stand in imminent danger of losing all their railroad investments. Further to help the farmers we would reduce their taxes and strengthen and increase the cooperative-marketing associations. None would profit more than the farmers by the final settlement of reparations and international debts.

Even more vital at this moment is national support of the unemployed wherever it is impossible for cities and States to carry the load. American men, women, and children must not be allowed to starve to death. That way lie disaster, chaos, revolution—all much nearer than the bulk of well-to-do Americans are aware. Public works would help tremendously, but far more important than these would be a guaranty from the Government of the United States that the men and women of this country shall not starve. The dread that hangs over the future of the whole country could be lifted to a considerable degree if the Executive would pledge himself, not next week, nor next month, nor when the

campaign is out of the way, but *now*, to use all his influence in behalf of money payments for starving Americans who cannot find work. That there should be immediate large expenditures for public works even if this should involve the issuance of bonds running into the billions is beginning to be plain to everybody; Mr. Hoover has now yielded to the extent that he favors what he calls "productive" public works on a large scale, while ex-Governor Smith and many others favor public works whether they are "productive" or not. But this form of relief reaches only manual laborers; it does not bring hope or courage to the idle millions of white-collar workers; to those who are idle on the farms. Nothing could so quickly bring back the courage of the plain people of America as the simple announcement from the White House that the Government of the United States was not going to be deterred by the bugaboo of a dole, or anything else, from guaranteeing the economic safety of the 12,000,000 people who are today out of work, and the additional millions who live in fear lest their jobs disappear.

When we are asked how this can be done we point out once more that we are not within seven billions of being as deeply in debt as we were during the World War; that no one would have complained had we gone ten billions further into debt when we were engaged in the business of killing Germans on a large scale. We see no reason why the expenditure of billions to keep American citizens alive is not infinitely wiser. Most Americans are sorry now that we ever went into the business of killing Germans, for they have come to see that it achieved nothing. Could anyone in his senses really assert that we should stop at anything to save American lives, to prevent disaster, and preserve the American Republic?

Finally, we would point out that only a beginning has been made in cutting down expenses; that, if the Government of the United States is really put on a business-like basis in its administrative expenses, enormous sums will be released for use in keeping Americans alive. Within the next twelve months, if things continue as they are, Congress and the President will be compelled to get down to business, will be forced to stop the \$500,000,000 waste in the expenditures for veterans which is established beyond question, and to cut military and naval expenditures to the bone. A genuine move toward disarmament in the United States without regard to what other countries may do is absolutely essential. As we have repeatedly pointed out, budget-making starts off now with a fixed charge of \$3,000,000,000—more than \$1,000,000,000 for veterans and pensions, more than \$1,000,000,000 for the public debt and debt service, and \$700,000,000 or more for army and navy expenditures. It is idle to say that all these are fixed expenditures that cannot be reduced. If Mr. Hoover had wisdom, courage, and force he could compel Congress to deal with the veteran and military expenditures before the coming summer is over, but the President is chiefly concerned with saving the banks and the railroads—big business, big business, big business. He refuses to grapple with the underlying causes of our economic disaster. O. G. V.

Europe in Extremis

OMINOUS for the whole world is the dismissal of the Brüning Government, coming as it does on the eve of the Lausanne Conference and presaging not economic betterment in Germany but greater political and social confusion. It happens, if we may judge by recent public utterances, just when the realism of France was beginning to make itself felt in the right direction of a common-sense and generous settlement. Now President Hindenburg has messed things badly, when every effort should have been made to permit Chancellor Brüning to carry on at least until the Lausanne meeting was over. At this writing no one knows whether his successor is to be a general or a dictator, or a combination government with Hitler in the Cabinet. In any event, the situation in Germany can only get worse, and with it that of Europe. No one will charge the London *Economist*, or Sir Walter Layton, its editor, with being sensationalist. But here is what the paper says in the current issue, as cabled from London:

International commerce is perishing with catastrophic rapidity. . . . Let us not mince words; with every factor in the existing situation making for a shift toward economic collapse, the prospects for next winter, both socially and politically, are terrifying unless by resolute action on the part of international statesmen the influences now at work can be reversed. The conference at Lausanne offers the last opportunity.

Edouard Herriot, who is likely to be the next French Premier, has just published an article in which he professes disquietude both at the German military budget and the Hitler "anti-Polish agitation." Add to this French fears over the present change in the German government, and all of the new French attitude of compromise may be lost.

Observers who had been closely following recent developments in Germany had been warned to expect the fall of Brüning. Yet the news that he and his Cabinet had resigned came as somewhat of a surprise. It had been hoped to the end that he would once more ride out the storm. For twenty-six months, through one of the worst periods in Germany's history, he had surmounted every difficulty despite the fact that he had had to work with an extremely slender majority in the Reichstag, and one that was none too friendly to his policies. Even the rising tide of Hitlerism had not caused him to depart from his calm and certain ways. The fact that the change was made at this time gives color to the reports that Brüning's fall was the result of intrigue and reactionary conspiracy. We know that the Junkers of East Prussia were fighting him tooth and nail because of his plan to settle unemployed workers upon their estates. We know, too, that a military clique headed by General Kurt von Schleicher, Secretary of State in the Ministry of Defense, had been seeking increased political power. It was this clique that forced the resignation of General Groener as Minister of Defense after Groener had brought about the suppression of Hitler's Brown Shirt army. The generals frankly looked upon Hitler's armed forces as a necessary and vital branch of the Reichswehr. But it is not clear whether Hindenburg was really moved by the

maneuvers and whisperings of the generals and other participants in the rumored anti-Brüning cabal, or whether the President lost confidence in his Chancellor for other and more substantial reasons. If it is true that Brüning was retired as the result of intrigue, then it must be said that Germany has learned little since 1914, for it was just such intrigue carried on by Baron Holstein and others which contributed so largely to the diplomatic debacle that forced the World War upon Europe.

Chancellor Brüning had in his twenty-six months in office greatly increased his personal prestige and hence the prestige of Germany. With a newcomer in the Chancellorship, and that person very likely an extreme nationalist, not only will Germany suffer, but this increase in nationalism will react upon the whole of Europe. There have of late been many indications of growing unrest, particularly in Southern and Eastern Europe. There is disaffection in the Yugoslavian army, and a minor reign of terror has taken place in that country. Premier Jorga of Rumania is in difficulty because of the financial situation and also because the leaders of the once-defunct Bratianu-Liberal Party are growing restive. Fascism has recently made sweeping gains in Austria. Czecho-Slovakia, which is at last really beginning to feel the effects of the economic depression, is also now for the first time since Masaryk became President showing signs of an extreme nationalist trend. In Poland there has been no let-up in the persecution of the national minorities and the radicals. Now with the reaction about to triumph in Germany it is more than possible that the uncertainty and unrest which have engulfed these neighbors will increase to a point threatening the political and economic stability of the entire world.

"Time for War"

UNDER the above heading the Grand Rapids (Michigan) *Herald* has delivered itself of an editorial about crime and punishment in the Republic. "Law and Government," the editorial declares, "have failed dismally in the last decade to deal with crime. . . . Today America, the American government, is oppressed by crime, her men are shot down in ambushes [*sic*], cowardly warfare, her women are ravished, her children kidnapped and ruthlessly killed." If this is a somewhat overdrawn picture of American life, it nevertheless has many aspects of truth. We are, and for centuries we have been, a violent people. Various explanations of this fact have been offered, none of them completely convincing. The Grand Rapids *Herald* does not explain, but it does offer what it considers a remedy. The editorial goes on:

It is the time for war, merciless war, in which every man shall do his duty, with the aid of the Law and of Government, if possible; but to do his duty anyway. . . . We have savages at large among us. . . . They know but one fear, the fear of their own precious lives. Those lives must be taken; legally, let us hope, but taken, nevertheless. . . . Can't the decent people of this great nation, those who are in the vast majority of population, handle the gangster and the racketeer without formality? No mistakes will be made. If the man thus handled doesn't happen to be guilty of the particular crime, he will have been

guilty of enough others so that no injustice would be done. . . . It is time for war, a war not of punishment, but of extermination.

It would probably startle the editorial writer in the *Grand Rapids Herald* to be told that in writing these sentences he perfectly expressed the spirit of gangsterism and of violent disregard of law and of government which he so heatedly denounces. He might be further surprised to hear that probably in no civilized country on earth except the United States would a responsible journal, not admittedly the organ of revolution, publish so bloodthirsty a column. He would be surprised to be called subversive, a champion of the overthrow of the United States government by force and violence. Yet that is precisely what he shows himself to be, and the unfortunate fact is that he is not alone, that many readers not only of the *Grand Rapids Herald* but of estimable journals in the country would applaud not only his sentiments but a lynching mob which sought to deal "with the racketeer without formality."

These observations, which a reasoned person who examined the facts coolly could hardly deny, ought to furnish very sober thought for us. How can we expect to scotch the gangster when we fight him with his very own weapons, at which he is more experienced and more adept. How can we hope to observe the law by taking it into our own hands? In the Fresno, California, *Tribune* appeared on May 4 an editorial about Tom Mooney. It quoted the hope of *The Nation*, expressed editorially, that the citizens of California would at the next election punish the Governor's refusal to pardon Mooney. "How ridiculous!" cried the *Tribune*. "For whatever may be the outcome of the next gubernatorial election, no candidate who hopes of election will dare to criticize Governor Rolph's refusal to pardon the dynamiter. For the overwhelming majority of the citizens of California believe that Mooney is right where he belongs; and that he should stay there." This, of course, does not go quite as far as the *Grand Rapids Herald*, which would have gangsters punished "without formality" whether they were guilty of the particular crime or not, on the theory of their general criminality. For that refinement of the theory of public disregard of law, we must go to the Supreme Court of California, which pointed out, in the decision denying a pardon to Billings, that Billings and Mooney were known to be suspicious characters and to have kept bad company, and therefore it was reasonable to assume that they ought to be in jail.

It has often been pointed out, by careful penologists, that we cannot hope to lessen crime in this country without removing its causes, whatever those causes may be. Poverty is generally thought to be one; lack of education is another; an insufficient social responsibility is a third. Let us frankly face the fact that not only our criminals need to be educated and to be given a sense of social responsibility. We must inform our lawless public officials and those among us who misguide public opinion, not to mention many respectable citizens who have so far kept out of jail, the "decent people of this great nation," that Judge Lynch is not the sovereign spirit of America. "The wrath of the people outside the law," to quote again the *Grand Rapids Herald*, is a terrible wrath and one that should not be lightly invoked; it might succeed in destroying the object against which its power was directed, but in so doing it would also destroy law itself.

Lady Gregory

AUGUSTA, Lady Gregory, is dead at the age of eighty, and her death serves to remind us of her great services to the "Irish Renaissance." Her own plays are of no more than secondary importance, for the best of them are slight and depend very largely upon the actors for whom they were written, but it was as well, perhaps, for the movement as a whole that she could consent to be its guiding spirit and to subordinate her own work to that of others. There was temperament and to spare in the group itself. There was also a most unusually tumultuous public opinion to be dealt with. But Lady Gregory moved with calm good sense in the midst of tumult, and she, more than any other one person, is responsible for the surprising fact that Edward Martyn, George Moore, William Butler Yeats, and John Millington Synge were supplied with a working institution to which they could be loyal and which, in turn, could be loyal to them.

Lady Gregory herself has described how it all began. She met Yeats for the first time in 1898, and when he spoke of his ambition to have a "free theater" in Dublin she came forward with twenty-five pounds to guarantee the first performance. The plays were to be Edward Martyn's "Heather Field" and Yeats's "Cathleen ni Houlihan," but when someone raised the question of the latter play's orthodoxy, Martyn would not be comforted until two priests approved. No sooner, however, was the play performed than a Cardinal proclaimed it heretical and students from the university came to protest violently against the "insult to their faith." This beginning was, of course, prophetic, for storms were the rule and they reached their climax in riots over Synge's "Playboy of the Western World." But Lady Gregory rode this and all other storms with calm good humor and the Abbey Theater had a long and distinguished career. Perhaps the one indisputable masterpiece produced by the movement is Synge's "Riders to the Sea," but the repertory as a whole was surprisingly rich. Indeed, even the most recent of Irish dramatists may still be fairly considered a product of the movement, since Sean O'Casey was also one of Lady Gregory's "discoveries." It was to participate in the dramatic renaissance that George Moore went to Ireland, and if he did not remain long, there were at least the three volumes of his "Hail and Farewell" to show for the experience. In it he said:

One thing, Yeats, I have always had in mind, but never liked to tell you; it is the way you come down the steps from the stage and stride up the stalls and alight by Lady Gregory. It irritates the audience, and if you will allow me to be perfectly frank, I will tell you that she is a little too imposing, too suggestive of Corinne or Madame de Staël. Corinne and Madame de Staël were one and the same person, weren't they? But you don't know, Yeats, do you?

But Moore, who went to Ireland because it was his native land and then ran away because he suddenly discovered that no good writer since the renaissance had been a Catholic, is hardly to be admired for balanced judgment; and if anyone had a right to be "imposing" in the Abbey Theater, it was certainly Lady Gregory.



That Rare Depression Specimen

World Action for World Recovery*

By HENRY HAZLITT

NOTHING is more calculated to lead the student of economics to throw up his hands in complete despair than a mere recital of the present actual economic policies of governments. What possible point can there be, he is likely to ask, in discussing refinements and advances in economic theory, when popular thought and the actual policies of governments, certainly in everything connected with international relations, have not yet caught up with Adam Smith? For the present-day tariff policy of Europe and America is hardly distinguishable from the tariff policies rampant in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The real reasons for those tariffs are the same, and the pretended reasons are also the same.

In the century and a half since "The Wealth of Nations" appeared, the case for free trade has been stated thousands of times, but probably never with more direct simplicity and force than it was stated in that volume. In general Smith rested his case on one fundamental proposition: "In every country it always is and must be the interest of the great body of the people to buy whatever they want of those who sell it cheapest." "The proposition is so very manifest," Smith continued, "that it seems ridiculous to take any pains to prove it; nor could it ever have been called in question, had not the interested sophistry of merchants and manufacturers confounded the common-sense of mankind." From another point of view, free trade was considered as one aspect of the specialization of labor:

It is the maxim of every prudent master of a family, never to attempt to make at home what it will cost him more to make than to buy. The tailor does not attempt to make his own shoes, but buys them of the shoemaker. The shoemaker does not attempt to make his own clothes, but employs a tailor. The farmer attempts to make neither the one nor the other, but employs those different artificers. All of them find it for their interest to employ their whole industry in a way in which they have some advantage over their neighbors, and to purchase with a part of its produce, or what is the same thing, with the price of a part of it, whatever else they have occasion for. What is prudence in the conduct of every private family can scarce be folly in that of a great kingdom.

One of the most stubborn notions which Adam Smith had to combat was that identifying "money" with wealth.

That wealth consists in money, or in gold and silver, is a popular notion which naturally arises from the double function of money, as the instrument of commerce, and as the measure of value. . . . To grow rich is to get money; and wealth and money, in short, are, in common language, considered as in every respect synonymous. A rich country, in the same manner as a rich man, is supposed to be a country abounding in money; and to heap up gold and silver in any country is supposed to be the readiest way to enrich it.

This whole notion, as Smith had little trouble in showing, was a childish one; it rested upon a mere verbal ambiguity;

* The eighth of a series of articles on economic problems, aiming to suggest a practical program for America. The ninth, on the railroads, by Winthrop M. Daniels, will appear next week.—EDITOR THE NATION.

and yet so firmly intrenched had it become that even those "who are convinced of its absurdity, are very apt to forget their own principles, and in the course of their reasonings to take it for granted as a certain and undeniable truth." The notion, unfortunately, seems as solidly imbedded in popular thought in 1932 as it was in 1776. On no other ground can we explain the pathological fear in nearly every nation today, not merely of an "unfavorable" balance of trade, but of imports of any kind that could possibly be made, at no matter what added cost, at home. The statesmen of the world in whose hands our destinies have been placed stand in their economic thought exactly where the mercantilists stood in the seventeenth century. A hundred and fifty-six years after Adam Smith produced his masterly argument for free trade, his countrymen are being humbugged by the infantile slogan "Buy British"; while the United States, which as the greatest creditor nation in the world has more reason than ever for reducing its tariffs if it ever hopes to have its loans repaid, maintains the most preposterous tariff system in existence.

It is frequently pretended that there are now reasons for high tariffs which the knowledge and conditions of Adam Smith's time did not enable him to see. It would be interesting to know what these reasons are. Smith was certainly familiar with the "infant industries" argument: he admits that a specific tariff may hasten the establishment of this or that industry, though he gives strong reasons for doubting whether in the long run a nation as a whole is any better off on that account. Certainly, in any case, the "infant industries" argument is an absurd one in the United States of today. Smith concedes, also, that it may be advisable to protect by tariffs certain industries essential to the national defense, though he also makes it clear that from any other standpoint such an indirect subsidy is just as much an unproductive economic burden as the expenditures for the army and navy. Nor was Smith even unfamiliar with the argument prevalent in every European country today, that tariffs were necessary as "retaliatory" measures, or for purposes of "bargaining." On the contrary, he found it necessary to relate the history of the purely retaliatory tariffs during the century before he wrote, as well as the wars they led to. And he conceded that retaliations of this kind might even be good policy if there was a genuine probability that they would procure the repeal of the high duties or prohibitions complained of. But he added:

When there is no probability that any such repeal can be procured, it seems a bad method of compensating the injury done to certain classes of our people, to do another injury ourselves, not only to those classes, but to almost all the other classes of them. . . . Those workmen who suffered by our neighbors' prohibition will not be benefited by ours. On the contrary, they and almost all the other classes of our citizens will thereby be obliged to pay dearer than before for certain goods.

And, as he remarked, tariffs imposed through sheer animosity are almost certain to be even more irrational than those imposed through the greed of manufacturers.

If the shade of Adam Smith were to revisit this planet today, I doubt whether it would be greatly shocked or astonished by the tariff policies it saw in practice. Adam Smith in the flesh had trained himself to hope for very little. "To expect, indeed," he wrote in his great book, "that the freedom of trade should ever be entirely restored in Great Britain, is as absurd as to expect that an Oceana or Utopia should ever be established in it. Not only the prejudices of the public, but what is much more unconquerable, the private interests of many individuals, irresistibly oppose it."

I quote "The Wealth of Nations" at this length, mainly to show how pathetically little progress the statesmen and the masses of the world have made in their economic thinking, which, as I have said, is in all international matters still at the level of the seventeenth century; but it is by no means to be inferred that the problem of tariffs is of no more importance in 1932 than it was in 1776. On the contrary, both technological progress and the circumstances of the last few years make tariff reduction one of the two or three most desperately urgent economic needs of the moment.

The effect of technical progress ought to be too obvious to need dwelling upon. The enormous increase in transportation facilities, in railroads, motor trucks, fast ocean freight, and so forth; the ease and immediacy of communication by letter, telephone, and cable; the growth of international markets, like that at Liverpool, where a minute change of price may effect within an hour or two a corresponding change of price for the same commodity in every other great market of the world; the growth of international banking transactions; the daily shifting of balances; the hourly adjustment of foreign-exchange rates—all these have combined to make the world increasingly a single economic organism, of which the individual nations are at bottom merely interdependent cells. This statement seems like a mere truism, but one finds no evidence in any important country of the world of any general policy based on the assumption that it is true. The actual policies of nearly every leading nation have been based on precisely the opposite assumption—that each nation is a self-contained economic unit. Indeed, in the face of what is with appalling obviousness the greatest *world* crisis in a century—when a financial panic originating in Austria swept through Hungary and Germany, then to Britain and the Scandinavian countries, and finally to the United States—when the indices of production, unemployment, and prices have in every country been moving in the same direction, and even to almost exactly the same degree (for example, in March, 1932, average wholesale prices in the United States stood at 66 per cent of their 1926 level, in Canada at 69 per cent, in Great Britain at 71 per cent, in France at 64 per cent, in Germany at 74 per cent)—in the face of all this, the President of the United States is capable of continuing to talk about our "self-containment," and of letting it be known that he "will devote his entire time to the domestic problems of the United States," and let Europe stew in its own juice.

The plain truth is that the pivotal business of the world today is everywhere conducted, not in separate national markets, but in what is, in effect, one great international market. Wheat, cotton, copper, petroleum, wool, silk, rubber, coffee, sugar, silver, gold—all are "international" commodities; their price is determined not by local or national

but by world shortages or surpluses, and a violent change in the price of any of them sends its repercussions through the whole business structure. The simple statement that our foreign trade is 10 to 15 per cent of our total trade does not indicate its real importance to us. It does not mean that we should be 85 to 90 per cent as well off if our foreign trade stopped altogether. We have to remember, first, that even a 5 per cent drop in the total demand for a commodity may mean a decline of 25 per cent or more in the price of that commodity, and that such a price decline may turn a general profit for the producers into a general loss. And we have to remember, second, that this 10 to 15 per cent is an *average* figure, and does not tell the story of any one commodity. More than one-half of all our cotton, for example, is ordinarily sent abroad; the sudden wiping out of our foreign trade would mean the ruin of the South.

Social causation is nearly always complex, and it is seldom that any given economic situation can be ascribed to any one single factor, but it is as clear as economic evidence can be that, second only to the war itself, the present depression is largely the result of the world's tariff walls, and particularly the tariff of the United States. One striking evidence of this was the violent collapse of the speculative markets as the preposterous Hawley-Smoot tariff advanced toward passage, a collapse which the proponents of the bill denounced at the time as a "Wall Street plot." Since then all the world's business has evidently joined the conspiracy to discredit that tariff. In the days before the war it was still possible for us to prosper in spite of high tariffs, but this situation altered abruptly when we were changed by the war from a debtor nation to the world's foremost creditor nation, and when it became absolutely necessary for us to increase our imports if the debts owed to us were to be paid. Though even the former Fordney-McCumber tariff was far too high, its ill effects were disguised by the fact that we began selling goods to Europe on a tremendous scale *on credit*. We not only refused on net balance to accept the interest on our former loans, but we extended in a few years billions of dollars of new loans. And then, quite suddenly, we stopped. The collapse of our own security markets made us panic-stricken. We no longer had enough faith in the rest of the world to extend it credit, and we did not feel we could spare the credit anyway. We wanted our money. We wanted a real liquidation of the debts. We wanted the outside world to pay the interest on its old debts out of its own resources, and not out of fresh loans. And instead of lowering the tariff to permit the outside world to do this, we raised it.

The effect of a tariff is always to subsidize inefficiency. A tariff is a device for insuring that a commodity which could be bought at a lower cost from abroad shall be produced at a higher cost at home. But when a given tariff level has been established for a long time, an adjustment to it is usually achieved, and a country can prosper at that artificial equilibrium. When tariffs are constantly and rapidly being raised all over the world, however, even this artificial equilibrium is not possible. It has been made doubly impossible at present by another factor, the violent fall of commodity prices. This is relatively unimportant in the case of those commodities which are subject to *ad valorem* tariffs, but supremely important in the case of those subject

to specific tariffs. Thus in 1928, when duty-paid raw sugar was selling in New York at an average price of 4.22 cents a pound, the specific tariff of 1.75 cents a pound on Cuban sugar meant an ad valorem tariff of 70 per cent; at the price levels of Cuban duty-paid sugar in May of this year—2.58 cents a pound—the specific tariff, now raised to 2 cents a pound on Cuban sugar, means an ad valorem tariff of 345 per cent!

It need hardly be said that an immediate reduction of world tariffs is now imperative. The United States, which took the leadership in raising them, must take the leadership in reducing them. Because the need for tariff reduction is general, there has been a growing belief that the end can be best achieved by an international conference. The present writer cannot subscribe to this belief. There is, to begin with, no possible basis of bargaining or exchange in such matters. If the aim proposed, for example, were that each nation should reduce its tariffs by 25 per cent, any nation could raise its tariff by 100 per cent or any other extravagant figure just before going into the conference. Tariffs, again, are not general, but specific; the tariff on each article is considered ostensibly on its own merits; and any bargaining, article for article, would be endlessly and hopelessly complicated. If an agreement were in spite of all finally arrived at, the various parliaments would have to pass on it in any case. Finally, the basic assumption of such a conference would be the thoroughly false one that tariff walls are beneficial to the countries that put them up and injurious only to foreigners, and that the lowering of tariffs represents "concessions" or "sacrifices" made by each nation merely for the good of the rest. Congress would be asked to reduce the tariff not as an essential need of our own but as a favor to Europe.

A far more direct, honest, and realistic path is for each country to act for itself. America must take the lead. A reduction of our tariff would be an enormous gain to us whether any other nation followed or not. I do not mean that we should return immediately to free trade, assuming that were politically conceivable. Even Adam Smith was careful to point out that "every such [tariff] regulation introduces some degree of real disorder into the constitution of the State, which it will be difficult afterward to cure without occasioning another disorder." Our immediate aim should be rather to approach our former equilibrium than to try to establish a new one. This could be achieved most nearly, perhaps, by a tariff reduction averaging about 25 per cent.

It is impossible to consider the tariff without considering international debts. The real problem of those debts is the problem of the international transfer of goods. In arguing against the cancellation or even the reduction of the European debts to our government, Senator Borah recently remarked that the annual payments on our debt called for only 2.45 per cent of the total budget of Belgium, only 3.75 per cent of that of Great Britain, only 1.41 per cent of that of Italy, and only 2.65 per cent of that of France. But he had nothing whatever to say of the far more relevant problem of transfer—of how Europe could secure a sufficient excess of exports to us over imports from us to make these payments possible, of whether we should be willing to lower our tariffs sufficiently to take this excess, of precisely what goods this excess would consist in, or of whether he would prefer to see the excess achieved merely by Europe's reduc-

ing by that much its purchases of American commodities.

What makes the settlement of the war-debts question of such immediate moment, however, is the problem of German reparations. Every informed and unbiased observer agrees that the reparations burden imposed on Germany by the Young Plan is not only a staggering load on the German taxpayer, but far larger than Germany can possibly be expected to meet out of an export surplus. The payments up to the time of the Hoover moratorium were made possible only by fresh outside borrowing—a simple borrowing from Peter to pay Paul—and that process has come to an end. This does not mean that the payment of *any* reparation is, strictly speaking, impossible. It is conceivable that Germany, after a further breathing-space of two or three years, could resume reparation payments on a gradually ascending scale until they reached an annual level of, say, about one-fourth that called for under the Young Plan. But would it be worth the while of France and her allies to exact this? Would it not be far better to secure the immense gain to world confidence that would be sure to follow a complete wiping out of the whole reparations problem?

One thing is certain: no realistic-minded person can seriously expect that France and her allies will ever consent to wipe out reparations, or even drastically to reduce them, unless their debts to the United States are similarly canceled or reduced. That is why the initiative on the whole question must come from the United States. That is why it is worse than stupid to keep on insisting that reparations are "purely Europe's problem." Wholly apart from any considerations of justice or humanitarianism, we must cancel or drastically cut down the debts for the most cold-blooded of business reasons. Our national income in 1929 was estimated at \$84,000,000,000. On the basis of present indices of trade and employment that income appears to have shrunk to a present rate of about \$56,000,000,000—a loss of about \$28,000,000,000 a year. The debt payments to us amount, in all, to \$270,000,000 annually. Is it worth while to sacrifice \$28,000,000,000—or even one-tenth that sum—for the sake of \$270,000,000? Is it worth while to lose \$100, or even \$10, for every dollar one collects—assuming one can really collect even that dollar?

The reduction of tariffs and the cancellation of the international debts are, then, the two most urgent moves necessary for world recovery. When these have been achieved, other forms of international economic cooperation may be possible—looking, for example, perhaps toward a conference to consider international monetary problems, or toward some measure of international control of raw materials. A beginning might be made by the appointment of a Permanent International Economic Board to make annual and special reports, to sound a warning—before it is too late—when any country or group of countries engages in policies that threaten world stability, and to recommend various forms of cooperation. At first such a board would have to depend for its effectiveness purely on the prestige and moral force of its opinion. Ultimately, of course, we must move toward something better than this. A world that has become a single economic organism cannot continue indefinitely to be controlled by seventy different political sovereignties, each of which, when it is not trying to prosper at its neighbors' expense, tries to pretend that it exists in an economic vacuum.

Burlesque

By JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

AS the dramatic season approaches its end I am reminded of the fact that the most conspicuous New Movement in the theater is that which moved the Minskys from Second Avenue to Forty-second Street and established burlesque in various theaters hitherto devoted to more serious things. I confess that until very recently I had left these new developments unstudied, but having now investigated them pretty thoroughly from the flea circus on down, I am impelled to make a report for the benefit of those who may have begun to fear that New York was going to the dogs despite Mayor Walker's well-known devotion to a "clean city." And I must begin with some account of an exhibition which is entitled "The Mystery of Life; or Love and Sex Explained on Living Models," because in simplicity of conception and execution it is the most remarkable of all.

The price of a ticket is only twenty-five cents, but for that sum one is entitled to hear a heart-to-heart talk by a gentleman who looks so much like a physician that he can hardly be one, and who points a pencil at the tummies of each of six girls in turn while he discourses upon the organs located thereabouts. The living charts are reasonably presentable and they are dressed in the costume made conventional by the participants in more frivolous entertainments—namely, a silver loin-cloth and what the French call in one of their rare euphemisms a *soutien-gorge*—but the lecture, instead of being, as one might fear, facetious or demoralizing, consists largely of solemn warnings about the dangers of constipation and the necessity of adequate hips. Persons under eighteen are not admitted; persons over that age are not likely to learn much. Yet it is interesting to note that at three o'clock on a week-day afternoon some four hundred people had the leisure and the quarter necessary to contemplate the spectacle.

So far, however, as the more determinedly ribald entertainments are concerned, I must confess my disappointment—not because I had expected to have my higher faculties employed, but because I had cherished the not unreasonable expectation that spectacles frankly addressed to man's lower nature might at least be successful in their appeal. I was not unwilling to be stirred in ways commonly considered unworthy, but I am bound to confess that I left these wicked theaters as pure in heart as I went in. Nor can I understand how a person who has ever been exposed to the ordinary Broadway review could be anything but bored by the spectacle of fifteen or twenty girls languidly executing very simple evolutions while exposing no more of their skin than do their handsomer and more spirited sisters of the "Scandals" or "Vanities."

"Strippers" or "teasers"—which is to say, young ladies who begin to unbutton their dresses at the end of a vilely executed and generally all-but-inaudible song—represent the only contribution of this particular art form, and even they soon pall. Doubtless the idea of removing the clothing bit by bit in response to the perfunctory clamor of the audience is in itself psychologically sound, and the one thing which I really learned was the fact that there is such a thing as a

technique of stripping which distinguishes the merely mechanical disrober of the cheapest shows from the artist who does manage to suggest a half-convincing lubricity. But after the tenth repetition of the process one begins to realize that, even with the best will in the world, no stripper can take off more than the members of the chorus have already dispensed with, and thus even the psychological effect is lost. Nothing remains except some labored jokes, some bad dancing, and some worse singing, until the time comes again for the same girl to take off the same number of garments which, as one now understands, were put on for this purpose alone. By the time the same buttocks have emerged for the third or fourth time from beneath the same slipping garment, even the most callow in the audience will, I think, have begun to lose interest.

Certain romantically-minded commentators led me to believe that burlesque was the sole contemporary guardian of the Rabelaisian spirit, but "Rabelaisian" certainly suggests the vigorous, the spontaneous, and the unrestrained, while no adjective could be less appropriate to describe the wearily mechanical antics of a group of underpaid and overworked performers whose employer keeps one watchful eye on the policeman on his beat. As a democrat I see no reason why the lower classes of society have not as much right to erotic stimulation as those who can afford \$5.50 for the conventional review. After all, the appeal of all such spectacles is fundamentally sensual, and the appeal is never subtler than the audiences for which they are intended. But the very humblest deserve something more effective than burlesque gives them, and the performances in some of these temples ostensibly devoted to Venus Pandemos are insults—not to God or motherhood—but to lust itself. Even it need not be as devoid of joy as some of these shows, which remind one of nothing so much as of the blandishments of a weary bawd who is trying for professional reasons to remember that for some men and women sex is still a living thing.

The audiences are languid though large, and this fact, I think, is evidence both that the patrons come in hopes of something which they do not get and that burlesque lives by eternally promising something which it does not give. Nor can I help but feel that the dogged patience with which hundreds of men and a scattering of women sit through insipidity after insipidity is proof of the fact that this queer society of ours shuts out a considerable portion of its members from adequate contact with experiences which human nature cannot be kept from craving. Grown men should not have the pathetic curiosity of little boys. Such public spectacles can be interesting only to persons whose private lives have been peculiarly empty—at least so far as the subject matter of the spectacles is concerned—and one is reminded of Sinclair Lewis's yokels who gloated over the underwear advertisements in the Sears, Roebuck catalogue. Naughty post cards have doubtless always had a marked appeal among the very young and the very old, but it is only in an essentially puritan community that they could be sold in large numbers to men in the prime of life.

Labor Turns to Politics

By EDWARD LEVINSON

IT was inevitable that the depression which has transformed the face of American industry, roughly shattering the nice arrangement that gave to the workers comparative security and a promise of permanent prosperity, would before long make itself felt in the field of labor politics. It was patent that the exclusive reliance of American labor on its trade unions, with their fatal deficiency in numerical strength, would fail it at a time when a large part of the productive machinery came to a standstill and the "No Help Wanted" signs appeared at the factory gates. The shift which overnight changed the West Virginia Mine Workers Union into an Independent Labor Party, when its strike failed last year, is typical of a story often repeated in American labor history. In times of depression labor has always shifted its gaze from the mill, mine, and office, closed and silent, to the seats of government in States and nation.

The Socialist national convention in Milwaukee, the party's only stronghold in all of capitalist America, gave ample evidence of the potent influence of the depression, not only to swing labor to political action, but also to reshape and modify established policies and practices. The impact of this new influence was felt all the more in a party which only lately had begun to emerge from a decade of decline, momentarily halted by the La Follette coalition of 1924. It was impossible to draw clear issues in the convention. Two of the groups seeking supremacy in shaping policies were new ones; one, the "militant" group, being probably a new expression of the old left-wing position. No national convention had been held since 1928, and that one had not concerned itself with the task of revaluing policies but with the simple job of maintaining the life of the organization. Almost half of the 253 delegates were new recruits, for the most part strangers to each other and to the delegates older in the party.

The convention left no doubt of the come-back of the party, whatever it may have lacked in unity. Most significant was the presence of young men already baptized in industrial and political campaigns. One had seven arrests to his credit as a result of picketing activities and free-speech fights. Another had found and organized two hundred Socialists in the hitherto barren State of Virginia. A third was a youthful strike leader of the textile workers of New Bedford, and a fourth had almost single-handed brought West Virginia back into the ranks of organized Socialist States. Maine, Indiana, and California also contributed several members to the youthful contingent. New York, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, and Ohio—States which had maintained Socialist organizations when they had largely disappeared in other sections—sent delegations of seasoned veterans. But these delegates also told of the influx of new blood, the recapturing of the imagination of a new generation, to fill the great void left by the loss of the post-war generation.

The convention had two major tasks before it. The first was the nomination of its national ticket, an important matter but one about which no difficulty was expected. The

second was more complex. It involved the clarification of questions of policy, many raised by the "militants," others brought to the fore by the newer and more vigorous campaigning methods of Norman Thomas. These latter had jarred on the older Socialists, jealous for traditional methods and phrases which Thomas thought inappropriate to the compelling needs of the time and the psychology of the working masses and voters. The party's position on how best to win the support of trade unionists and its position on Soviet Russia were involved in these policies, as were questions of organizational and campaigning technique.

The Socialist "militants" first became vocal after the New York mayoralty campaign of 1929, in which Norman Thomas polled the unprecedented Socialist total of 175,000 votes. Strangely enough, the "militants" and the more orthodox wing of the New York party joined forces at this stage of the party's history. Both felt that Thomas's thorough analysis of municipal government made in the course of his fight on Tammany Hall went into such minute detail as to stress issues remote from pure socialism. The campaigns of Louis Waldman for governor of New York State in 1928 and 1930, which also brought substantial increases in the party's vote, and, concurrently, the joint chairmanship by Thomas and Waldman of the party's eminently successful public-affairs committee, only brought further criticism from the "old guard" and the "militants." The city convention of 1930 saw a resolution presented by them, jointly sponsored, deploring the "mistakes" made in recent campaigns. The hasty withdrawal of this criticism and the substitution of a paragraph lauding the party's recent leadership were done for the sake of party harmony, but served only to postpone the day of conflict.

While Thomas was being criticized for what was held to be too great stress on immediate issues, he was proving himself farther to the left than his critics by his work among trade unions and by his insistence on a rigid Socialist code of ethics for party members within the unions, many of whom felt that socialism was a sort of private religion to be practiced within the party church but not obtruded on the sensitive ears of non-Socialist trade unionists. With respect to Russia, too, Thomas lacked the resentment felt by leaders of the orthodox group, whose most distinguished spokesman said in 1928 that "the Soviet Government had been the greatest disaster and calamity that has occurred to the Socialist movement." Thomas shared the views on trade-union policies and Russia of the members of the "militant" group. While the "militants" appeared to be in agreement with the "old guard" conception of hewing to the fundamentalist Socialist line, they sharply decried the lack of energy of their older comrades. Borrowing a line from the British Independent Labor Party, they urged "Socialism in Our Time." In this also they were closer to the Thomas position. Discussions in the official party press and the publication of Norman Thomas's "America's Way Out" brought the issues to the Socialists outside of New York City, many of whom had been staging debates on party policy similar

to those running in New York. The party looked to the convention to resolve these clashing views into some unified Socialist policy.

The nomination of Thomas for the Presidency was accomplished in the early stages of the convention, with an enthusiasm reminiscent of the demonstrations of old party nominating sessions, without, however, any of the mechanically induced and stage-managed noise. There was no other choice considered or possible. All but a scant few of the more diehard "old guard" recognized the tremendous feat accomplished by Thomas in the nation as well as in New York. His New York campaigns had definitely turned the tide of defeatism. Throughout the nation for four years he had carried the Socialist message, from the platform and over the radio, to millions of Americans. His Emergency Committee for Strikers' Relief had succored many thousands of strikers. Trade-union conventions, colleges, public forums, debates—he had used all these to promulgate the single message of the necessity of Socialist reconstruction. No Socialist had become so widely known or so popular since Eugene V. Debs. For his running mate the convention named James H. Maurer. Maurer had performed the same Socialist function in 1928, when Thomas made his first Presidential race for the party. With Thomas, the eloquent platform man, the alert thinker, and the pungent writer, and with Jim Maurer, risen from the ranks of organized labor to lead Pennsylvania's trade-union forces for a score of years, the convention fused the elements best representative of the party and its aims.

Soviet Russia proved the first thorny subject after the harmony of the nominating session. No fewer than five resolutions were offered on the subject. One, drawn by Morris Hillquit in an effort to conciliate the various factions and keep the party from dividing on what he felt to be a largely extraneous issue, favored recognition of Russia by the United States—as did all the others on the subject—urged the freeing of working-class political prisoners, stated the differences between socialism and communism, and concluded with the equivocal declaration: "To the extent that the economic regime of Soviet Russia eliminates the profit motive in industry and seeks to introduce a unified system of planned production for public use, we heartily support it and commend it to the emulation of all nations." This resolution might have met the demands of those who wanted a friendly statement had they not felt that the bitterly anti-Soviet articles published in some party organs and the occasional attacks on Russia by party leaders, most of them associated with the Jewish Language Federation, required a more positive declaration of support for the Soviets' efforts at economic reconstruction. Paul Blanshard of New York presented a resolution, with the support of Norman Thomas, which "indorsed the efforts being made in Russia to create the economic foundations of a Socialist society." This resolution, which carried the convention by a card vote of 9,114½ to 4,073½, declares:

WHEREAS, The Socialist Party recognizes that the Soviet experiment is being watched closely and with intense interest by the workers; that its success in the economic field will give an immense impetus to the acceptance of socialism by the workers, while its failure will discredit an economy based upon planned production and the abolition of capitalism; be it

Resolved, Therefore, that the Socialist Party, while not indorsing all policies of the Soviet Government and while emphatically urging the release of political prisoners and the restoration of civil liberty, indorses the efforts being made in Russia to create the economic foundations of a Socialist Soviet and calls on the workers to guard against capitalist attacks on Soviet Russia. We believe that economic and political conditions in each country should determine the revolutionary tactics adopted in that country, and that the Russian experiment is a natural outgrowth of the conditions peculiar to that country.

Trade unionism was another subject scheduled to rouse the convention to sharp debate. Powers Hapgood, a member of the Indiana delegation, argued for a specific program of action among the organized and unorganized which would bring them closer to the party. The creation of a national labor propaganda committee to help existing unions and push efforts to organize the unorganized was the cardinal point in his program, which went down to defeat by only a few votes. The majority resolution, drawn by James Oneal of New York, and supported on the floor by veterans of the trade-union movement, grown old, and some of them tired, in the struggle, incorporated many of the best features of the Hapgood proposal. The National Executive Committee of the party is instructed to create a permanent committee to raise and administer strike relief. Socialists are to work within unions for the democratization of their organizations wherever such action may be necessary; they are to take every opportunity on the floor of the unions to bring home the Socialist message; suitable literature for distribution among the unorganized is to be made available.

Much of the effectiveness of the trade-union resolution will of course depend on the vigor with which the new National Executive Committee of the party pushes its various recommendations. The great difficulty in setting the Socialist Party and its trade-union members on the road to militant campaigning for a class-conscious trade unionism arises from the bad feelings left by the tactics of the I. W. W., and before that by Daniel De Leon and his dual Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance. Veteran trade unionists in the party took the floor in rapid succession at the convention. They harked back to the '90's, to the 80's, and even back to an earlier period in Germany for examples of the dangers of impetuous youth meddling in mature trade-union affairs. The debate brought no criticism of the American Federation of Labor, as was implied in the resolution. But the composition of the new National Committee gives hope for a more vigorous trade-union policy, outside of New York at any rate, than has been seen in a number of years.

The unity of the convention was again restored for the consideration of the platform, drafted by Harry W. Laidler. Two debates—one on prohibition, the other on the method of transferring the industries of the nation to the government—brought out the only serious differences on the platform planks. After having rejected as too sketchy a 250-word platform—the shortest ever written, according to Heywood Broun and Oscar Ameringer, its authors—the convention adopted a comprehensive statement of social reconstruction by democratic means, with special reference to and provisions for the unemployment crisis.

On prohibition the convention showed frankness and courage unusual in political statements on the subject.

While Republican and Democratic leaders in safely wet States have at times favored repeal, the Socialist is the only party thus far to have written a flat declaration into its national platform. Delegate Broun had his defeat on the short versus the long platform, and again on favoring "confiscation" of industries, but he had his triumph on prohibition. Repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment, "and the taking over of the liquor industry under government ownership and control with the right of local option for each State to maintain prohibition within its borders," was the gist of the plank finally adopted, by a narrow vote. The dries in the convention have refused to give up, however, and have instituted steps for a referendum of the party membership on a motion to strike out the repeal plank.

To pave the way for socialism and far-reaching social legislation without having to submit to the pruning knife of the courts, the platform proposes enactment of a "workers' rights amendment" to the federal Constitution. This amendment would empower Congress "to establish national systems of unemployment, health and accident insurance, and old-age pensions; to abolish child labor, establish and take over enterprises in manufacturing, commerce, transportation, banking, public utilities, and other business and industries, to be owned and operated by the government." The preamble places greater emphasis on the broad program of social ownership than on specific measures. An indication of the party's administrative conception of a socialized industrial system is contained in a plank which provides for management of wage-earners, consumers, and technicians.

To ease the tragic lot of the millions of unemployed the platform proposes two appropriations of \$5,000,000,000 each; one for immediate relief to be administered directly to the jobless; the second to institute the construction of public works and for roads, reforestation, and slum clearance. In this latter program the cooperation of State and city governments is to be sought. Government aid to small homeowners and farmers to protect them against foreclosure and sale for non-payment of taxes is the substance of another plank dealing with the current crisis.

The contest for the national chairmanship of the party brought the most tense session of the convention. A purely honorary post, held first by Eugene V. Debs, then by former Congressman Victor L. Berger, and from 1929 on by Morris Hillquit, it has in recent years begun to be considered a symbol of party leadership. The opposition to Hillquit's reelection was tacit. On the surface, support for the election of Mayor Daniel W. Hoan of Milwaukee to replace Hillquit was on the general ground that a Middle Westerner could best understand the American political psychology. William Quick, of the Wisconsin delegation, in proposing Mayor Hoan, said the party needed "less mouth-work, more foot-work." Concrete political achievements, not theoretical treatises, were needed to make socialism an effective force in the nation. The opposition to Hillquit also came from the "militant" benches and from the supporters of Norman Thomas, who disliked Hillquit's attitude toward Soviet Russia and in particular thought he had compromised the party by acting as counsel for former owners of Russian oil in their efforts to recover the value of their property. Hillquit was also felt to be too far to the right on trade unionism, and to have tolerated, as party leader, the questionable political and labor activities of Socialists within some of the

New York unions. Hillquit's lack of administrative capacity in recent years, a quality which is of prime necessity in a member of the National Executive Committee, was another count against him.

The lines were not drawn on these issues, however, largely because the Hillquit opponents wanted to avoid recriminations and speak only of the future. Hillquit's supporters filled the void where the issues should have been by dragging in the dangerous cry of anti-Semitism. In doing this, they carried the convention for Hillquit—for no Socialist gathering will tolerate any hint of racial prejudice—but did the party a great disservice. The absurdity of declaring that a candidacy enthusiastically supported by B. Charney Vladeck, manager of the Jewish *Daily Forward*, had any remote connection with an anti-Jewish feeling is self-evident. Hillquit himself emphasized quite other grounds in an address made in defense of his position. He placed the controversy in the realm of policy by asking for an indorsement of his brand of socialism as against the "unholy alliance" of "reformism, intellectualism, and militancy," which, he said, was the character of his opposition. Hillquit concluded with a plea for a vote of confidence. A roll-call vote gave him what he asked, by a majority of some 500 votes out of a total of 14,000 cast. Despite his effort to make the controversy touch some issues, his election was effected by the support of members of the factions he had described, among them militants, "reformists," and even bitter anti-New Yorkers like James D. Graham of Montana, who had been forced off the National Executive Committee of the party in 1928 because of his alleged provincialism. While most of the vote for Morris Hillquit was on the basis of his policies, the deciding votes came from delegates loyal to him as a result of association with him for more than forty years in the struggle for socialism.

The election of a new National Executive Committee, the ruling body of the party between conventions, was a second contest that tested the new temper of the party. Voting was frankly and openly on "slates"—one drawn by the Hillquit forces, and the other by the Thomas—"militant" group, who had the Wisconsin delegation as allies uninterruptedly except on the trade-unionism issue. Ten members were to be elected to serve with National Chairman Hillquit. All seven on the slate of the Thomas group were elected, while six of the ten on the opposition ticket were chosen. Three candidates were on both slates. The new committee is representative of the growing stature of the movement. It includes Mayor Hoan, Leo Kryzcki, vice-president of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America; and Jasper McLevy, head of the Bridgeport labor movement, who came within an inch of capturing the city for the Socialist Party last year. These were supported by both groups. Norman Thomas; Powers Hapgood of Indiana, who did his post-graduate college work in the mines of half a dozen countries; Darlington Hoopes, Pennsylvania legislator; and Albert Sprague Coolidge, of the Harvard faculty, were elected on the Thomas-Wisconsin-"militant" slate. The remaining three places were filled by Lilith Wilson, another Reading Socialist member of the Pennsylvania legislature; James D. Graham, president of the Montana State Federation of Labor; and John C. Packard, Los Angeles attorney, associate of Upton Sinclair and other members of the Southern California liberal and literary circle.

In the Driftway

ARTHUR GARFIELD HAYS, who made a courageous trip to Kentucky a while ago, was the recipient of a letter which the Drifter would like to be able to quote in full. It explains in convincing detail what life is like in the coal fields, and although the material is not new it has never been more dramatically presented. The first paragraph follows:

After reading about you and your party being Bars from Bell and Harlan Counties I am force to write and tell you as a Citizen of Kentucky. I regrets very much to read such and account I am going to tell you as a Miner of Harlan Count some facts why you outsiders are Bars—1st the conditions in Harlan County among the miners and their family are bad. We are force to take all cuts the company make regardless. 2nd We are half fed because we can't feed ourselves and family's with what we make. And we can't go to a Cut rate Store and buy food because most all the company forbids such trading. If you got the cash. But now we have no cash. And the companies keeps their food stuffs at high prices at all time. So you can not clear enough to go anywhere. And if you do go some where and buy food you are subjects to be canned under the one man "Law" and kick off the Company Property or thrown off. And now we are coward down. Can't tell the boss we are dissatisfied with conditions.

* * * * *

AFEW items on the cost of food follow. Lard at the company store is 15 to 18 cents a pound; pork chops are 35 and 40 cents; sugar is 10 cents; butter, 50 cents; flour is \$1.10 for 24 pounds. Company "cuts" are then listed: rent from \$6 to \$12 a month; doctor, \$1 a month; hospital, about \$1 a month; blacksmith, burial fund, school, powder, fuses, insurance—a total of something like \$7 or \$8 deducted, in addition to rent, from pay envelopes before they are issued. The author goes on:

We have been eating wild greens since January this year. Such as Polk salad. Violet tops, wild onions. forget me not wild lettuce and such weeds as cows eat as a cow wont eat a poison weeds. Mr. Hayes our family are in bad shake childrens need milk women need nurishments food shoes and dresses—that we cannot get. and there at least 10,000 hungry people in Harlan County daily. I know because I am one off them. these people would welcome you to come to their shacks but the company forbid it. The Black Mountain Coal Corp. last year fired a man because he was talking to a "Lady" writer. from Pittsburgh, Penn. he had a wife and five childrens. and was force to vacate in twenty four hours. . . . I would leave Harlan County if I had only \$6 to send my wife and boy to Bristol, Va. and I could walk away—But I can't clear a dollar per month that why I am here. that why hundreds are here they can't ship their family's home. But I am Glad we can find a few wild greens to eat. and before I close I want to impress this on your mind

Mr. Smith atty. of Bell County

and Mr. Blair Sheriff of Harlan County

Said the people didn't want you. to enter they are wrong. its not the mineing people its their friends and the com-

pany's they are indebted too. So Mr. Haynes I am proud that you and your party had enough Yankee blood in you all to attempts to enter after you had been dares to come. We Miner want to thanks you for the interest you take in trying to find out the conditions. that we are in. And again I wont to impress up on your mind not to Publisher my name as it would mean my head beat.

There is very little that the Drifter can add to this letter. He has the original before him as he writes. It looks authentic and it certainly sounds authentic. And it presents a sorry picture.

THE DRIFTER

Correspondence For Peace

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: I trust this expression of Dallas Lore Sharp's attitude toward war, which I have uncovered among several of his unpublished manuscripts, will help the cause you urge weekly in *The Nation*.

We can, we will end war. Let the world burn that belief into its heart. Let men everywhere make that purpose their politics and religion. On this faith and purpose we make our last stand for civilization. So help us God. But how? What can we do in America? We can remove some of the causes, and mitigate all of the causes of war. We can bring our common sense, our scientific temper, and our religious faith to the study of war prevention. There is no single cause of war but can be understood and cured, no condition that gives rise to war but can be foreseen and prevented.

What can we do? Let me bring common sense to bear upon the question. First we can do what we are doing today—educate, agitate, talk, preach, pray, write, vote—spread it thick, spread it far until the earth shall be full of hatred of war as the waters cover the sea. Let us have a newspaper in every city, like the *Christian Science Monitor* in Boston, devoted to no more war, to offset the journals that fatten on war. Let rich men establish funds to found such newspapers, not as business enterprises but, like our colleges, devoted to the truth which makes men free.

Again, we can vote "No More War"—we can vote out war by electing men to Congress who are pledged to end war. America cannot go to war until the Senate says so. We can fill that Senate with men who will say, "No More War!" We are approaching another national election, one-third of the Senate to be elected in 1932. Is your vote going to count. Is your candidate pledged to "No More War"?

Again we can and must rob war of glory. We have loved war. We have gloated over war. We have erected statues to our war heroes. Our city squares and village greens are still dedicated to soldiers. They must be so no more. The statues already erected must from this time on be draped in black. And we must build them no more. We shall continue to love and honor the heroic dead, but it must be with wailing and with gnashing of teeth at the thought of their futile and preventable sacrifice.

Again we must force business to do its share for peace. But business is now on a war footing. The protective tariff breeds war. It is the greatest single fomenter of war today. It is war—economic war—and this last war was nothing but an economic war. We shall never get far toward no more war until we destroy this militant spirit and principle in business which make a foreigner and enemy one thing, and which establishes an economic

blockade in order to destroy the business of all people outside our own borders. At the outset we can and must join with the other nations in a league to end war. Such a league is already established, in spite of our refusal to share its perplexities, and working to end war. We must have an international mind and heart, an international brotherhood of statesmen and peoples; we must have an international court, a body of international law—a League of Nations to outlaw and to put an end forever to war. We can and we shall end war. Let the world burn that belief into its heart. Let men everywhere make that purpose their politics and their religion. On this fact we make our last stand for civilization. So help us God.—
DALLAS LORE SHARP.

Boston, May 12

GRACE HASTINGS SHARP

From a Japanese Liberal

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Militarism here, as one of my American friends, a college president, in a recent letter to me says, "is in the saddle," and we liberals of Japan have a hard time to deal with it. But Japan is not so mad and blind as American newspapers often accuse her of being; she is not "the Attila of our new age." American reports of Oriental affairs are often mysteriously contaminated, probably through a gallant sympathy with the weaker nation. My American friend says, for instance, that he has heard that Kagawa is in jail. This is utterly absurd, since he has caused no trouble, not even so much as Dr. Nitobe, whose case contra militarism was of course trifling. As to the Shanghai incident, the military activity and manslaughter on a grand scale cannot be condoned from our pacifist point of view. Japan, however, is not the only nation to be blamed on that score. For her way of coping with the situation is not essentially different from your method of dealing with weaker nations in Central America and elsewhere. Even at the outbreak of the Shanghai affair, as many as seventeen war vessels of the United States navy were imprudently gathered in Shanghai harbor, though no single American life had yet been injured. Had there come by ill chance a little provocation either from the Japanese or the Chinese side, your country might have been dragged into war. So was the Japanese naval brigade drawn into that terrific carnage through the recklessness of the Chinese contingents who defiantly betrayed the terms accepted by their local authorities.

The fact that "war for self-defense" is not prohibited by the Kellogg Pact or by the League Covenant is the most salient defect of the international structure and this defect needs most urgently to be amended. Japanese militarism is strutting proudly within the law, legally as impeccable as any of the other imperialistic nations of the world which find themselves in a similar situation requiring them to act for reprisal or to protect their nationals. The Sino-Japanese conflict, indeed, resulted in war *de facto* but not *de jure*; that is the crux of the matter. In order, therefore, to secure universal peace and brotherhood, it must be the concerted effort of pacifists of all nations to outlaw war in any form whatever, even for self-defense. Militarism today never wages a war except for "self-defense," which is in fact a diabolical pretext for the self-defense of militarism itself, lest it be swept out of existence by the world-wide movement of peace advocates and war resisters. But we should not be deluded into thinking that outlawing of war could permanently secure world peace. Not only the means of war, but the causes of war as well, must be outlawed, must be eliminated.

Professor Borchard of Yale University well said in *The Nation* (March 23, 1932) that an American boycott against

Japan would inevitably drag the two nations into an international war. Professor Borchard is not here theorizing, nor is his a grandma's anxiety; the real fact is that the Chinese boycott and China's inveterate cultivation of hatred against Japan even through grammar-school education are at the basis of the Sino-Japanese conflict today. It would be very fair to outlaw Japan for her anti-humanitarian use of military force, if you likewise outlawed China for her no less anti-humanitarian use of the boycott and her cultivation of international ill-will through education. In fact, the Chinese boycott against Japan is no spontaneous, optional affair among Chinese patriots, but is forced upon Chinese merchants by the outrageous violence of the militarists.

As the Chinese militarists use incompetent mercenary troops which are easily swept away by a well-trained army, observers were astonished to see how bravely the young student volunteers of New China resisted the foreign impact at Shanghai. A great pity that a considerable number of these youthful patriots were left dead on the field! And why were they so brave? Because they suffered martyrdom for the cause of their anti-Japanese catechism, their patriotic creed! And who is responsible for their martyrdom? If you say it is the aggressor, the Japanese militarist, the answer is a half-truth, for the cause is largely the Chinese propagation of international ill-will through education, which must also be outlawed if world peace is to be maintained.

RIICHIRO HOASHI

Waseda University, Tokio, Japan, May 9

"Voluntary" Contributions

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Apropos of Mr. Milburn's article "Alfalfa Bill" Murray, readers of *The Nation* may be interested in the following letter addressed to the president of the University of Oklahoma, of which mimeographed copies were forwarded to every member of the faculty:

State of Oklahoma—Executive Chamber
October 6, 1931

DR. W. B. BIZZELL,
PRESIDENT, OKLAHOMA UNIVERSITY,
NORMAN, OKLAHOMA

DEAR DR. BIZZELL: As you are aware, Governor Murray expects in the near future to submit his initiative program to the voters of the State. In order to do so the proposals have to be printed and signatures obtained, and it is his desire that this should be done on a single day at the several county seats. The legislature failed to appropriate any money to pay for the printing of the petitions and other necessary expenses. In order to meet these expenses voluntary contributions will be necessary. It will take \$7,000 or \$8,000 to meet these expenses.

It is Governor Murray's desire that all State officials and employees in the several departments under the Governor give a small contribution. I would suggest a minimum of two dollars and a maximum of ten. It is Governor Murray's wish that the heads of the several departments and institutions collect this money and that it be remitted direct to Governor Murray, *an itemized statement showing each contributor attached.*

I would be very much gratified personally if you would look after this. Governor Murray will be absent several days and I am, therefore, taking the liberty to write to you myself. *It is important that this collection be made with dispatch and without delay.* [Italics supplied.]

[Signed] CLAUDE WEAVER,
Secretary

Oklahoma City, April 25

M.

Finance

Compelling Us to Recover

WITH almost no serious opposition, the country is about to embark upon the third, and entirely logical, stage in its program of stimulating business recovery. The first, embodied in the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, was an expression of the belief that business would look out for itself if the government would help it over a tight place and keep it out of the bankruptcy courts. But it quickly became obvious that the same railroads which borrowed in January or June to meet bond interest, maturities, taxes, or supply bills were likely to turn up again six months later with new requests. Instead of an emergency hospital, the R. F. C. was on the point of becoming a home for incurables.

Thereupon the second step was taken—namely, open-market purchases of government bonds on a large scale by the Reserve banks. If, it was argued, these purchases result in the accumulation of idle money in the member banks, those banks will have to set about lending or investing it. They will not invest in government obligations, because the price will be so high and the yield so low that there will be little attraction in them. But it turned out that there was a great deal of attraction in them when there was so little attraction in any other form of investment.

So at last we have come to the point where, if private enterprise will not spend money to fatten pay rolls and stimulate the markets for materials, the government itself will do so through a public-works program ("Garner plan"); or, approaching the problem from another angle, if business men who are willing to risk their credit in undertaking new work cannot get loans from the banks, the Reconstruction Finance Corporation will grant the loans—properly secured, of course (Mr. Hoover's plan).

The saying has got abroad that it would be an unpardonable sin for the government to sit by and do nothing at this time by way of putting the economic house in order; and anyone can heartily agree with that. But it is, after all, important that the right thing be done. Is the government doing the right thing in these repeated attempts to force money into circulation? The devices thus far used have been disappointing. They have not shown the closely reasoned technique of the plan, for example, recently suggested by Colonel M. C. Rorty, who believes it might be effective if the government would offer bonuses, figured as a percentage of pay rolls and materials bills, to contractors who would undertake new construction; the bonuses to be publicly advertised and to be awarded to the lowest bidder.

It seems a fair generalization to say that no plan is likely to be effective unless its prospects of success are sufficiently convincing to outweigh the distrust created by the additional burden laid upon the public credit and the taxpayer to finance it. Suppose we abandoned the rather annoying pretense that the budget will be balanced next year, but passed an honest tax bill looking in that direction. Suppose our genius for propaganda were directed toward getting public opinion lined up behind a few concrete proposals for government economy, even to the extent of organizing torch-light processions and soap-box oratory in their behalf. Suppose we told Europe we were prepared to negotiate a realistic settlement of the war debts. A difficult program, with public morale at its present low ebb; but certainly not less promising than any program which tries to build up private credit while it tears down government credit.

S. PALMER HARMAN

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Inheritance

By FRANCES FROST

Before sheep came, before my fathers drove
The first gray flock into this pasture high
Against the wide blue morning of their time,
The hollows were sweet with emptiness, the grass
Bent down at summer's end and fed the earth.

My fathers strode the hills, my fathers climbed;
Sunlight warmed the moving backs of sheep;
Emptiness was filled and wild grass nibbled;
Silence broke softly when beneath the deep
Weight of moonlight young lambs cried and stumbled
Against their mothers' flanks that smelled of sleep.

The moon is a heavy shadow on the harsh
Anatomy of earth. The sheep are gone;
The pasture has returned to wildness, driven
With tangled and budded thickets toward the dawn;
My fathers' throats are stopped with earth, their mouths
Forever crushed against the breast of stone.

Half-baked Communism

Breakdown: The Collapse of Traditional Civilisation. By Robert Briffault. Brentano's. \$2.50.

THE only thing intelligible about Mr. Briffault's book is its enthusiasms. For its conclusions are neither sound nor consistent. He asserts that "traditional civilization," because it is based on class divisions, is breaking down, and that the signs of its collapse are evident in all forms of contemporary culture. "Traditional civilization" is a blanket phrase which covers slavery, feudalism, and capitalism. Indeed, Briffault claims, none of these societies can be properly regarded as organized, since class divisions have never permitted the harmonious functioning which is essential to all organization. Never having been organized, the wonder is that civilization did not collapse long ago. But Briffault settles the difficulty by implying that it has always been in a state of collapse. He leaves unexplained how one society developed from another, ignores the specific nature of the different class antagonisms in the past, overlooks their often progressive character, and fails to see that the very meaning of what it is to be organized has varied with the social context. A strong spirit of moral indignation pervades his descriptions of social life; justice and injustice are the central terms in the discussion. "Traditional civilizations," Briffault writes, "are bound to decline in power and to be destroyed [because] they are unjust. To be unjust is so serious a defect in the structure of a social system as to be fatal to it." Injustice, however, is merely a Pickwickian expression for what human beings do not like. The rise and fall of civilizations, therefore, is explained by inarbitrable likes and dislikes whose succession follows no determinate law.

Mr. Briffault himself is all for communism. And he is to be applauded for his insight that no tinkering with capitalism will enable us to avoid the evils of war, cyclical depression, and cultural perversion inherent in the existing social relations of production. Would that he had demonstrated how organic these phenomena are to capitalism, instead of contenting himself with

emphatic assertion! But I cannot understand why Mr. Briffault should make his allegiance to communism an excuse for prating downright nonsense about the future of culture in its name. Parts of his book read as if they had been written by an enemy of communism masquerading as its friend in order to appal the innocent by the ferocity and absurdity of its presumed conclusions. The technique is a simple one. Do Communists believe that it is utopian to expect the transition from capitalism to the classless society to be accomplished without the use of force against active, counter-revolutionary elements? Briffault desires to go even farther. For him this can be accomplished "only by ruthless and intolerant violence." He is prepared to convert a political expedient into a poetical cult. Do Communists believe that during the transitional period the parliamentary forms of bourgeois political democracy will be suspended in order to prepare the way more effectively for a society of genuine democracy, intellectual tolerance, and individual freedom? Briffault professes to have no use at all for the principle of tolerance—political or intellectual.

The anarchy of the modern mind is the logical effect of the logically indefensible doctrine of toleration and freedom of opinion which was the subterfuge by which valid thought escaped being forcibly suppressed by authoritarian tradition. Such a subterfuge is, of course, like all liberal compromises, not a remedy. The only remedy would be the quite liberal, intolerant, and wholly undemocratic suppression of convicted lies.

As if communism guaranteed absolute infallibility of judgment, which is the only logical ground—and even then, not the only relevant one—for the forcible suppression of opinion regarded as erroneous. As if communism were a new gospel of truth instead of a method of insuring the cooperative and universal quest for truth liberated from the vested interests of class, race, and nationality. Mr. Briffault has somewhat confused communism with Roman Catholicism.

Do Communists believe, on the theory that a part of life must be subordinated to the whole, that certain traditions in art and literature which express a reactionary ideology—for example, Dostoevski's—must be opposed by fresher, life-affirming attitudes, reflecting the creative and collective effort to achieve a truly human society? For Mr. Briffault this is a paltry half-measure.

For my part the moderation of the alleged Russian procedure appears somewhat dangerous. The whole of Western literature, whose every phrase, every word, and every implication is saturated with the insane and immoral premises of traditional civilization, should, for a period, be withheld entirely from the new humanity. The mind of the human race should be allowed time to recover.

That there will be no mind left after these heroic measures are taken is perhaps only a minor and irrelevant consideration in Mr. Briffault's eyes. In interpreting communism as if it implied complete cultural discontinuity with the past, Briffault is caricaturing both its theory and practice. He is pleading for a new barbarism in order to avoid the difficult problem of critically reworking and reinterpreting the old traditions from the standpoint of new cultural needs and ideals.

Mr. Briffault's analyses—if we may stretch the term—of contemporary culture are no better than his programs and prophecies. They exhibit the same enthusiasm and the same absence of intellectual discrimination. While it may be true that, broadly speaking, bourgeois ethics, social thought, and art reveal deep-seated confusion and uncertainty, it is nothing short of silly to maintain that "all thought is decadent today." When Mr. Briffault speaks of the breakdown of science in an era which has witnessed epoch-making discoveries in every field of

knowledge from biology to mathematical physics, he is but documenting his ignorance. That scientists outside of the laboratory fall over themselves in their eagerness to save God and justify the existing social order which gives them security and research funds is a cultural phenomenon neither new nor surprising. Its significance is social, not scientific. Even Newton wrote a book on the prophecies of Daniel; and Darwin made the acceptance of his biological theories easier by professing his belief in God.

Nor is Mr. Briffault any more discriminating when he discusses the relation between politics and culture. "At a time," he writes, "when the gulf which divides the values of a dying and those of a rising world is abysmal and unbridgeable, no product of the mind, no art, no judgment, no science can contrive not to take sides." Certainly, as far as a choice between capitalism and communism is concerned, the artist, the scientist, the mathematician, the toolmaker cannot avoid the necessity of taking sides by pretending to be neutral to the fundamental issues involved. But that is vastly different from saying that all thought, from science to music, must reflect one's political allegiance. Such a position is more compatible with absolute idealism than with dialectical materialism. To be sure, the direction of scientific research and the uses to which its discoveries are put are dependent upon the larger, telic, social whole of which science is a part. But the meaning and validity of a scientific proposition are completely independent of whether science functions in a capitalist or Communist order. Art, literature, ethics, and religion, since they involve value judgments at their very core, are organically related to political perspective and social context. But even here there are degrees of relevance which critical analysis must make explicit. Forms do not change as rapidly as content. In philosophy they change more slowly than in art; in art more slowly than in law. These are problems which challenge concrete analysis. They cannot be settled by paying lip allegiance to the formulae of Marxism.

Mr. Briffault's "Breakdown" proves that a little communism is a dangerous thing. Swallowed without proper study and critical analysis, it goes to the head like wine on an empty stomach. Communism is not a royal road to truth for lost intellectuals who wish to enjoy the privileges of guessing right without suffering the responsibilities of piece-meal analysis. It demands not less criticism but more, for it must contend not only against the misrepresentations of its enemies but against the nearsighted sincerities of its friends. It does not claim to have the whole truth but merely enough to justify the action by which all social ideals are ultimately tested.

SIDNEY HOOK

The Futility of Conquest

Conquistador. By Archibald MacLeish. Houghton Mifflin Company. \$2.50.

THERE can no longer be any doubt as to the position of Archibald MacLeish in American letters. He is an important poet and the master of an original technique that is now recognized as his own vehicle, a loosely woven music that once heard can never be forgotten. Excepting T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound, MacLeish has found the best expression of the American expatriate mood which characterizes an entire period from 1920 to 1930 and has already reached a sentimental climax in Ernest Hemingway's "A Farewell to Arms."

"Conquistador," his latest poem, is more than a good poem; it is very nearly a great one, and if it is not great in itself it is the work of a rare and sensitive lyric artist. The poem is large enough in intention and scope to be admired

and attacked from at least a dozen points of view. I shall limit myself to a direct consideration of the poem itself and of its relationship to two other pieces of work published by MacLeish during the past two years—his book of fourteen lyrics, "New Found Land," and his letter "To the Young Men of Wall Street," which appeared in the January 16 issue of the *Saturday Review*. All three examples dovetail with one another, arise from precisely the same state of mind, and are written with the same eloquence.

First of all, "Conquistador" is not a narrative poem but is perhaps one of the best equivalents for a narrative that has been subjected to a modern technique in poetry. The story, based upon Bernal Díaz del Castillo's history of the conquest of Mexico, is completely submerged, being merely the backdrop for the poem, subservient to the general mood of the poet. Bernal Díaz is an old man recalling past glory; the strength of the poem lies not in action but in reflection after the event. Occasionally the clipped, inarticulate speech of the soldier rises to the surface of the poem with something of the same effect that is gained in Ernest Hemingway's short stories.

The emotional tone or mood of the poem is defined by MacLeish's self-identification with the Conquistador, Bernal Díaz, whose days of conquest are over: again and again we are reminded that we are looking backward, not with clear perception or with true historical perspective, but with a broken memory. The fine days of blood, of war, of gold, and of girls to be bound into slavery are gone. Even power and victory—in the sense of conquest—leave the taste of death in the mouth. The impulse to idealize conquest for its own sake is checked by a sense of futility and impotence.

If we examine MacLeish's "New Found Land" we find the logical motivation for the present poem. The fourteen poems, which are by the way among the finest examples of lyric eloquence in English, reiterate a central theme—expatriation. In Paris there is a longing for New York; in New York there is a great desire to reembrace Paris. At the core of this restlessness, this search for a spiritual home, is a persistent inquiry as to the nature of actual death, as though expatriation were death in terms of subtle definition. Thinking of MacLeish one thinks of Eliot's Whispers of Immortality:

Webster was much possessed by death
And saw the skull beneath the skin;
And breastless creatures underground
Leaned backward with a lipless grin.

"Conquistador" is the further search for a homeland to be found not in North America, or Europe, or in this century, but back in the days before the Spanish Armada, along the coast of Yucatan and in Mexico. Remembering Eliot's Webster, here are lines from the introduction to "Conquistador":

This is Cortes that took the famous land:
The eye-holes narrow to the long night's ebbing:
The gray skin crawls beneath the scanty beard:
Neither the eyes nor the sad mouth remember.

This curious deification of archaic military glory takes on still another aspect in MacLeish's address to the Young Men of Wall Street, who are in MacLeish's words the sons of Caesar! Throughout this letter there are mingled notes of sorrow, panic, and despair. The Conquistador poem and the Wall Street letter merge into one. Only the artist in MacLeish keeps his integrity; the rest is delivered over to a weak confession of defeat. As for the Young Men of Wall Street—O poor (and rich) young men! After the crash of 1929, after the repeated failures of your experts (some of them your own fathers, who have, in a few cases, already committed suicide), after the loss of millions of dollars spent to bring back prosperity, after panic at home and worse panic abroad, are you flattered by this attention from a poet? Do you understand what he has to say, our sons of Caesar! You are Conquista-

dors marching into Mexico (forget the oil fields for a moment), look at the girls, look at the horses! Look at the slaves, millions of slaves. Enjoy them all—but remember they are dead, and the Conquistadors, once heroes in the less important records of our history, they, too, are dead.

HORACE GREGORY

In the Ozarks

Back Yonder. An Ozark Chronicle. By Wayman Hogue. Minton, Balch and Company. \$3.

ANY man's memory of his boyhood is the memory of a world which time refused to touch. Doubtless this is an illusion; from the fact that time cannot alter the things we remember we argue a certain fixity in the things themselves. As we have grown up we have been forced to accept an existence in which change operates relentlessly and always; back in those days, though, the universe was anchored and ordered and comprehensible. An illusion, doubtless. But it is an important one—at least for literature, since it produces autobiographies, and makes their early chapters usually the best.

The peculiar charm of Mr. Hogue's book is that it has more than the timelessness of its type. For it deals with one of America's most stationary societies—mountain Arkansas—and makes not the slightest attempt to "place" this society in human history. For all Mr. Hogue appears to know, Arkansas was inhabited by white people exactly like his parents and his neighbors three thousand years ago; and at the close, when he describes his return to these hills after many years spent elsewhere, he cannot believe that the people down there will ever be any different from what they are now or from what they were when he was a boy in the eighties. Writing in the plainest possible way, he manages to do what more artful authors merely try to do—he gives his world that simple, solid reality and permanence which it would seem we cannot give a thing when we are aware of wanting to do so. His account of the reticence with which young persons courted one another—his sister Lelia, for instance, and Sam Dent—is the account not of an inhibition but of a taboo; of something tied into the habits of a race immeasurably old. So there is nothing quaint or pathetic about Sam and Lelia, or in the least degree helpless; rather they are dignified by their contact with custom, a contact so close as to make them for the moment something like figures in a myth. So, too, with every other person or thing in the book—old Everet, the free school, the panther and the baby, the debating society, the feud, the book agent. Mr. Hogue begins with a minute description of the one-room log house in which he grew up. But his attitude throughout the chronicle, which takes him among many persons and into adjoining counties, is the attitude of one to whom all the Ozarks are his house. Everywhere he is as intimate and as real as that.

He seems to me particularly successful with his people's talk. I do not know that he is accurate, but I am more than willing to believe he is, since it is highly agreeable to think that people once lived who were perfect at understatement and indirection. "Stranger, can you play the fiddle?" "I can saw a little." "Wal, if I was goin' to kill a fiddler I would never shoot at you." Or this, the opening of a feud: "Wal, Guffy, you air eatin' sardines, air ye?" "Hit would seem that a way to anybody cep'n to a bline man." . . . "Goin' to eat some more sardines, Guffy?" "Will ef I wanten. Don't see nobody in hyar wot's big enough to keep me from it." "Mebbe not. I hearn ole Tommy Wilson offered you a mule to come over an' whup me. Jist want to say I'll give you another soon as you do, an' then you'll have a pair."

MARK VAN DOREN

Mr. Hale Versus Spengler

Challenge to Defeat: Modern Man in Goethe's World and Spengler's Century. By William Harlan Hale. Harcourt, Brace and Company. \$2.50.

MR. HALE will be remembered as the former editor of the *Harkness Hoot* and the embattled opponent of the Union League Club educational ideal with which Yale has recently identified itself. "Challenge to Defeat," a remarkable performance for a young man of twenty-one, is as courageous in spirit as was his undergraduate career. Its author may not know precisely what he wants, but he is pretty certain of what he does not want. He does not want pessimism and futilitarianism in art; he does not want "the modern temper"; he does not want sur-realism and *transition*-ism in literature, or cubism in art; he objects vigorously to the flight to equations and abstractions in the new physics; to the sham façade of contemporary organized religion; to the post-war disillusion of Ernest Hemingway. In brief, he asks us to admire the magnificence of Spengler's thesis but to resist it with all our strength. (His analysis of the strength and weakness of Spengler is the outstanding section in the book—though, as the author would readily admit, it is founded on the approved recent German criticism.)

As a foil to Spengler, he offers us Goethe. In Goethe he sees "the union of the individual with the world (whether natural or divine)"; "the newer recognition of human possibility"; "the unknowable, reintegrating deed which we might call totality." It is my guess that Mr. Hale has been so deeply steeped—perhaps owing to paternal influence—in the Goethe legend, and in the suety abstractions of idealistic German thought generally, that he has lost, to a degree, his sense of proportion. For—as I hope to show shortly in these columns—Goethe is, of all the imposing plaster casts of the last few centuries, precisely the man from whom we can derive the least inspiration and instruction today. And these phrases around which Mr. Hale has built the less convincing portions of his book are the last flatulencies of a vitalism which was always nebulous but which is now thoroughly empty of content.

Goethe was a professional "culture" defender; and it is because Mr. Hale has gone back to Goethe's tradition of "good Europeanism," with its accompanying aloofness from the bitterer realities of the European scene, that his program, with all its youthful spirit and vigor, is basically academic. To him the modern "collapse of reality" is definable mainly in terms of art, science, and religion. He does not see that these special disintegrations are merely functions of a larger socio-economic collapse, and so he cannot advance any constructive ideas other than those contained in misty phrases: "the century of separation is over"; "the first necessity in this process of regeneration is of course the individual spirit." And it is this inability to define his own aspirations, drawn out of a dead culture, that leads him straight to a final hollow romantic assertion, the exhortation to go down, if necessary, fighting gloriously, to go down with "the grand gesture, the fist proudly raised up, the dignity and solemn grandeur last asserted." But there is no sense in doing any fist-raising unless you know against whom your fists are raised. Let us hope that there are other young men of Mr. Hale's generation with enough humor to smile at his operatic stoicism and with enough understanding of the problems of their time to reject his early-nineteenth-century idealism. Perhaps, within a few years, Mr. Hale himself will see that the author of "Faust," while eminently successful at providing mental food for four generations of schoolmasters, offers contemporary men little more than a diet of wind.

CLIFTON FADIMAN

Prince of Doubters

Bayle the Skeptic. By Howard Robinson. Columbia University Press. \$4.25.

"THE more I study philosophy, the more of incertitude I find therein." So remarked, at the beginning of his career, Pierre Bayle, prince of doubters. "Say to Monsieur Gaillard," he continued, "that I am a philosopher without portfolio, for whom Aristotle, Epicurus, Descartes are the inventors of conjectures which one adopts or rejects, according to the style of amusement one prefers." The biography of such a man, sworn enemy of all fanaticism, astute journalist, great scholar, Voltaire's "avocat-général des philosophes," will always be timely, because the things he fought against are always, in one form or another, with us. Howard Robinson, a protegee of James Harvey Robinson and of Lynn Thorndike, has written what appears to be the first full-length critical study of Bayle, his character and his ideas, attempted in English. This alone makes his book a valuable contribution to the history of European culture, especially for that period just preceding the French Revolution for whose general intellectual temper Bayle was so deeply responsible. The great problem then was toleration, and we are shown how, from every angle, but especially in the tiresome field of religion, Bayle defended the right of every man to be damned or blessed in his own way. In pamphlets, letters, journals, commentaries, and in the mighty "Dictionnaire historique et critique," forerunner of the "Encyclopédie" of Diderot and d'Alembert, the tireless skeptic indulged in what one of his Sorbonne enemies called his "malignant and unfortunate habit of putting everything in the form of a problem." With such good results that Mr. Robinson notes the influence of Bayle upon David Hume, John Locke, Lord Shaftesbury, Bernard Mandeville, Bishop Warburton, Edward Gibbon; in Germany upon Leibnitz, Thomasius, Lessing, and Frederick the Great; and in France upon Voltaire, Fontenelle, Diderot, d'Alembert, and most of those associated with the Enlightenment. Mr. Robinson's book, despite its lack of literary charm and its rather mechanical treatment, is well worth reading; and the very full bibliography of Bayle adds to its value.

HAROLD WARD

Convicting the Innocent

Convicting the Innocent. By Edwin M. Borchard. Yale University Press. \$3.75.

IN March, 1924, Irving Greenwald, with blue eyes and blond hair, was walking along Wall Street. A detective tapped him on the shoulder and addressed him as J. C. Alderman. Greenwald was indicted for passing forged money orders. Several clerks, a credit man, and a druggist swore that Greenwald was the man who had cashed the forged orders. Greenwald was convicted and sentenced to seven and a half years in Atlanta. The judge denounced him for his persistence in maintaining his innocence. Similar forged money orders continued to be reported after Greenwald went to jail. Eventually, Richard Barry, alias Alderman, the real culprit, was caught and admitted to all the crimes. He was sentenced to three years. As innocent Greenwald left the penitentiary he carried in his pocket a statement of the President of the United States: "Innocent of the offense of which he was convicted."

Professor Borchard has written an exciting volume. He has presented in a startling dramatic fashion an important social problem—the duty of society to a man who has been sent to prison for a crime he did not commit. Much has been written on the subject, and in his introductory chapter and appendix

Professor Borchard gives a survey of the history, literature, and legislation concerning unjust convictions; but the essence of the book is in the sixty-five actual cases of men and women who were sent to prison for crimes of which they were innocent. The stories are told very simply and without any literary flourish, but their cumulative effect leaves the reader appalled that such things are possible in a supposedly civilized state. The cases which Professor Borchard selected deal with murder, burglary, prostitution, and a great variety of other crimes. These defaults in justice were not prompted by economic antagonisms. The cases deal with the ordinary run of men. The innocent people include both Negroes and whites. The courts which erred were sitting in nearly half of the States of the Union and in England.

The stories are particularly shocking to those who have been actively connected with the practice of criminal law. Most members of the bar complacently assume that convictions of the innocent are so rare as to be negligible. The public as a whole has agreed that the safeguards placed by our beneficent criminal law about the person of a defendant have reduced the possibility of error to a minimum. All this we have smugly assumed despite our daily experience with perjury on the witness stand and with the well-recognized fallibility of human observation. For centuries we have given lip service to Hale's dictum that our criminal jurisprudence is based upon the proposition that it is better for a hundred guilty men to escape punishment than for one innocent man to be convicted. We have converted this preference to read: "Let a thousand guilty men escape and let a hundred innocent men be convicted." Like the celebrated presumption of innocence and the rule of reasonable doubt, the old dictum has been more honored in the breach than in the observance. In recent years legislative and judicial bewilderment with the intricacies of the crime problem has invested the man hunt with a new ferocity.

This volume puts the Wickersham Commission to shame. Not only does it present a brief for social insurance for miscarriage of justice, but it points an accusing finger at overzealous prosecutors, avenging witnesses, concealment of evidence of innocence, and ruthless frame-ups. As a requisite to petit-jury or grand-jury service this volume should be prescribed reading. Nor would it do any harm if the judges in all courts—civil and criminal—dropped their week-end detective novels to read the Borchard book. These sixty-five stories are only samples of the thousands of convictions that flow through our courts every year. To compensate the innocent is important, but it is far more important that we reform our judicial machinery.

MORRIS L. ERNST

A Pioneer Anthropologist

Lewis Henry Morgan: Social Evolutionist. By Bernhard J. Stern. University of Chicago Press. \$2.50.

UNTIL recent times it has been difficult for students of social theory to discuss with detachment the ideas associated with the name of Lewis Henry Morgan. An outstanding exponent of the doctrine of social evolution, he turned to primitive life for data to support his hypothesis. Together with the British and German scholars who believed that man's social behavior "evolved" in a way similar to that in which physical types developed, Morgan must be regarded as a pillar of the "stage" theory of social development—a theory that is still widely in vogue among lay writers and speakers. While scientific anthropologists of our generation have succeeded in demolishing this hypothesis, the smoke of the battle that has been waged is still in our nostrils, and therefore the study made in this book has a freshness of interest that most accounts of those

who developed concepts no longer accepted do not possess.

Dr. Stern, who is an assistant editor of the "Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences," throws a great deal of light on the origin and development of the ideas associated with Morgan's name. It is not quite fair to call his book a biography—that is, a biography of the man or of his personality. It is essentially the biography of a concept. Only the first chapter is devoted to the actual incidents in the life of Morgan. Succeeding chapter headings make it plain what it was in Morgan's life that interested the author, for he employs as titles either the actual titles of Morgan's book or phrases which characterize them. Many points of interest come out as Dr. Stern's discussion develops. The controversies which followed the publication of his great work "Ancient Society" make especially interesting reading, and names of the giants of early anthropology, such as Tylor, Spencer, Bachofen, Lubbock, and others, are sprinkled through pages on which we also find samples of their reviews of Morgan's works or extracts from their correspondence with Morgan.

I do not believe that it has been generally realized how broad were Lewis Henry Morgan's interests—that, for example, he published studies of the beaver in an attempt to analyze animal psychology, or that he was almost as interested in Mexican archaeology as he was in the social life of the Iroquois Indians. It is perhaps also not generally realized that Morgan was one of the solid citizens of his time. He was a man of wealth, a senator of the State of New York—a person of standing in his conservative community. And while it may seem strange that such a point need be mentioned here, it is necessary to do so because of the fact that his name is usually associated with radical political movements. Karl Marx knew Morgan's work and made copious notes on it, and Engels, who had access to Marx's notations, made Morgan known to every Socialist and Communist. It is for this reason that Lewis Henry Morgan, of the same family as John Pierrepont Morgan, holds a place today in the ideology of these radicalisms that no one would have abhorred more than he.

Dr. Stern has written a stimulating as well as scholarly account of the development of the ideas of this student whose works so influenced the growth of social theories. The book is well written and attractively printed. It should be of value to all who are interested in the presentation or analysis of the concepts usually grouped under the phrase "social evolution."

MELVILLE J. HERSKOVITS

Shorter Notices

The Place of the Lion. By Charles Williams. W. W. Norton and Company. \$2.50.

Suitably inscribed with crosses and chrismons, this English novel, one of the strangest books of the season, derives its inspiration from the symbols of the medieval church. Mr. Williams, who appears to be a devoted reader of the Schoolmen, has attempted to concoct a sort of metaphysical thriller by assuming that those apocalyptic beasts which in Abelard's day corresponded to Platonic Ideas have literally returned to the modern world. An English countryside, therefore, is terrorized by a lion, an eagle, a serpent. These are not only literal beasts which roar and smell and crawl, but "angelicals" which signify the archetypal forces of life. Mr. Williams has worked out his symbolism with great ingenuity, relating each of his characters to a metaphysical pattern. In the end the hero, symbolizing Adam, or man, quells the beasts by naming them; they return to a world underground; and the modern apocalypse is over. A serious reader will regret that so much learning and ingenuity have been expended on a subject that

is ultimately trivial, recalling a pertinent line from Gilson, the neo-Thomist leader: "A real philosopher always speaks of things; it is the professors of philosophy who talk of ideas." For the truth is that Mr. Williams's "metaphysics" is a smoke screen, and his philosophical fantasy is not philosophical at all but simply a kind of professorial spoofing. Its content is actually about as serious as P. G. Wodehouse. Its audience will be more limited, for only a few will be able to get the joke.

The Deserter. By Lajos Zilahy. Translated from the Hungarian by George Halasz. Doubleday, Doran and Company. \$2.50.

In this excellent, although uneven, novel the author of "Two Prisoners" gives us a chronicle of Hungary during the war and the years of revolution and counter-revolution that immediately followed. Zilahy's hero, Komlossy, typifies the patriotic Hungarian in revolt against the tyranny of the Hapsburgs. In the last year of the war Komlossy deserts; he feels that Austria's war cannot be Hungary's. About to be shot as a deserter, he is set free by the revolution. His intense nationalism is absorbed in the new Communist regime, which fails, however, to enlist his full sympathies. When the counter-revolution comes he is murdered while defending himself against the presumption of the invading army. To the foreigner the political thesis in Zilahy's novel is likely to be confusing, and indeed it may be doubted if it is entirely clear even to the author himself, especially in the last phases. Essentially the book is defeatist in tone, and Zilahy's hero would seem to have been submerged by his own hopelessness and weariness of soul rather than by the counter-revolution.

The Birthday. By Samuel Rogers. Jonathan Cape and Harrison Smith. \$2.50.

If one were to follow through the implications of this new novel by Samuel Rogers, who is a professor of French at the University of Wisconsin, one would get the impression that all is serene in the world. Although one of its underlying themes is the social change that has taken place in America from 1914 to 1929, and although it is realistic and intelligent throughout, it purls on with a beautiful obliviousness to the troubles that have made the rest of us so anxious. The scene—perhaps this explains it—is a college town, apparently Providence, Rhode Island. The characters belong to the more prosperous element of an academic circle. We see the lovely Katherine at a dance on the night before she is to be taken away from the influence of Gabriel, a young pianist whom she loves; three years later, during war time, we see her married to the solid but uninspiring Albert; and twelve years after that we see her at a birthday party given in her honor, to which Gabriel returns as an ascendant virtuoso. It is the modern version of an old-fashioned romance, told in a discreet variation of the "interior monologue" method and showing a reminder now and then of Virginia Woolf. No one will find fault with Mr. Rogers because he is not entirely original, however, for he is charming. Katherine's delicately modulated story is told with a sympathy, a sureness, a sweetness that would disarm anyone.

The Place of Prejudice in Modern Civilization. By Sir Arthur Keith. The John Day Company. \$1.

In this book a distinguished scientist—one who has made notable contributions to the study of man—indulges himself in the luxury of prejudice—not, however, quite in the manner recommended by Charles Sanders Peirce. Speaking as Lord Rector before the students of the University of Aberdeen, he lends the full weight of his authority to an astounding series of pronouncements concerning "Nature" and civilization; the upshot of which is that the former has "implanted" race prejudice in man's "tribal heart" in order that she may "bring into

the world ever better and higher races of mankind." From this it follows, according to Sir Arthur Keith's sanguinary logic, that "patriotism is part of Nature's machinery for keeping her evolutionary teams intact," and that "Nature keeps her human orchard healthy by pruning: war is her pruning hook." Regretfully, as though it were inevitable that two and two should make five, Sir Arthur adds: "This harsh and repellant forecast of man's destiny is wrung from me." Scientific, no less than logical, decorum is affronted on almost every page of this singular document. For example, the continued reference to such concepts as "tribal heart," "tribal spirit," "tribal mentality," "Nature's original scheme," "Nature's evolutionary plans," "Nature's machinery," is the purest and most specious form of anthropomorphism. ("Nature," with a capital N, is appealed to about fifty times, not merely to explain but to defend those "inborn likes and dislikes . . . which we name prejudices.") The extremely dangerous, because so provisional, "glandular" theory is regarded as part of the "race-making machinery," and there is the further claim, challenged over and over again by Franz Boas, that nations are "races in the making." All of this is accompanied by much rhetorical praise of nationalism and of Scotland; quoting Thomas Carlyle and Adam Smith leads Sir Arthur to say: "We Scots are a sentimental people. Sentiment and prejudices are first cousins." Presumably, some readers may be tempted to conclude, the eminent ethnologist would rather be known as a Scot than as a scientist.

Psychology at Work. Edited by Paul S. Achilles. Whittlesey House. \$2.50.

The seven essays in this volume will give the general reader an excellent idea of a few of the things being done today in the broad field of applied psychology. The editor, Paul S. Achilles, has brought together a series of lectures delivered under the auspices of the Psychological Corporation; their subject matter ranges from education and child guidance to industrial, social, and political problems. Considerable space is given to the experimental and statistical aspects of the questions dealt with—particularly in the contributions by Lois Hayden Meek and Arnold Gesell on education, and in the very detailed Psychology and Industry by Morris S. Viteles; and throughout emphasis is laid upon the importance of fitting society and the environment to the individual. In the final essay the present trend of applied psychology is well indicated by Floyd H. Allport, who shrewdly remarks that "those experts who are more eager to apply scientific methods to the efficiency of social institutions than to individuals may be making the most unscientific blunder of all."

Films

The Art of René Clair

WITH his third film, "A Nous la Liberté" (Europa Theater), René Clair establishes himself as the most accomplished and intelligent exponent of the art of the cinema. This is not to say that he is unsurpassed in all aspects of film-making. The Russians provide richer photography; the Lubitsch "touch" has a human warmth that Clair lacks—and probably scorns. The interesting fact about M. Clair is that he has mastered his technique as a whole so thoroughly that he is now able to employ it freely in creating a style of his own. In his hands the film, about which so little in the way of definition or scope has been understood, much less formulated, emerges almost for the first time as a separate and fully developed form of artistic expression.

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Merry-Go-Round—Avon—W. 45 St.

Of Thee I Sing—Music Box—W. 45 St.

Reunion in Vienna—Guild—52 St., W. of B'way.

Show Boat—Casino—7 Ave. at 50 St.

Springtime for Henry—Shubert—W. 44 St.

The Animal Kingdom—Empire—B'way. at 40 St.

The Cat and the Fiddle—Cohan—43 St. & B'way.

The Man Who Changed His Name—Broadhurst—44 St. W. of B'way.

Why Hoover?

Fifth of a series of weekly talks by

Oswald Garrison Villard

Over Station WOR

Wednesday, June 8

7:30 P. M. Daylight Saving

When writing to advertisers please mention The Nation

M. Clair made it clear in his first picture, "*Sous les Toits de Paris*," that the film as a form of art must not be confused with the necessarily static stage play. Motion, both obvious and subtle, is the distinctive element of the camera as a medium, and it is in terms of motion that M. Clair has worked out his motion-picture technique. In "*Sous les Toits*" he achieved a stylized realism to which photography is intrinsically adaptable; and he achieved it not through any resort to stylized settings or bizarre photography such as were employed, for example, in "*Dr. Caligari*," but through constant variation of perspective, composition, and light. Also, he made use of motion itself, particularly of the motions of the body and of facial expression, which can be exploited fully only by the moving camera and which for the illumination of character are the most effective and economical medium. The plot was simple and fast and ended in irony. He used dialogue sparingly; his use of music was conventional and direct, consisting of a "theme song" and occasional rhythmic accompaniment to action in the tradition of musical comedy.

"*Le Million*" was another experiment, this time in fantasy. Again, the effect of fantasy was achieved not through any trick of setting or photography but by the mobile use of the camera before referred to. The chase, which is equally suited to the mood of fantasy and the technique of the moving camera, played a large part in "*Le Million*." Music, in the second picture, if my memory is right, was used incidentally and for broadly humorous purposes. The plot was ingenious, fast, and again ended in irony. "*Le Million*," though it seemed slighter, was a more finished production more surely handled than "*Sous les Toits*"; it was a second important experiment in M. Clair's developing technique.

"*A Nous la Liberté*" combines the stylized realism of "*Sous les Toits*" and the fantasy of "*Le Million*." Implications as well as events are allowed to assume dramatic and convincing shape. From a realistic scene the spectator is led quite imperceptibly into the fantasy of implication until the two are inextricably fused. For instance, the scene in which blackmailers threaten the wealthy factory-owner is presented realistically. But, later, the chase in which the gangsters pursue their victim through the halls of his factory becomes pure fantasy as M. Clair multiplies into abstraction the blank walls and staircases which are real enough to begin with, and extends the chase to fantastic limits of time and space. Finally, in the scene in which the blackmailers, after the pursuit, find themselves locked in the great vault which is filled with money they are powerless to take away, realism and fantasy, event and implication, merge. The same technique is employed in the sequence which leads to the film's climax. In an extremely realistic and highly amusing scene the owner of the factory is shown announcing to his full-dressed directors and leading citizens his invention by which phonographs can be made without human labor. As he speaks, a wind rises. It blows open a case of mille-francs notes which during his pursuit by the blackmailers he has managed to hide on a roof in preparation for his escape. The notes, one by one, are blown past the noses of the distinguished guests. Here fantasy begins, and the sequence ends in a wild chase in which bank notes are pursued by respectable gentlemen while the wind blows harder and harder and dignity becomes a silk hat rolling in the dust, a swallowtail flapping in the breeze. The result, obviously, of M. Clair's combination of realism and fantasy is satire of a high order.

The story of "*A Nous la Liberté*" is simple, written by Clair himself directly for the screen. Two friends in prison plan to escape. One gets out, the other is caught. Through a series of accidents the first becomes owner of a phonograph factory so large in scale that its employees, like its machines, are automatons. It is here that the two friends meet, when the second one, having been released from prison, is picked

up as a vagrant in a field adjoining the factory and hustled into a job. The adventures of the two until the day when the factory-owner, who is about to be arrested as an ex-convict, gives his plant to the workers and escapes from his factory prison with his dreamy companion, who has failed in love, are as hilarious as they are ironic. For despite the intellectual cast of the film, its characters are flesh and blood; its action is as fast and as funny, even aside from its implications, as Chaplin at his best. More deftly than ever M. Clair has created a film in terms of motion in which the expression of the eyes and the movements of the body play a great part. The music which was a song in "*Sous les Toits*" becomes in the third picture an extremely clever ironic musical accompaniment—written by no less a composer than Georges Auric—which like the dialogue never obtrudes upon but heightens the excitement or humor or suspense of a given scene.

The technique of René Clair as displayed in "*A Nous la Liberté*" is much closer to the technique of music than of any other art. The picture has a theme, the theme of prison, which is first stated simply and then repeated throughout the picture with variations of rhythm and elaboration, rising to a climax in the scene before described in which mille-francs notes, silk hats, and respectable gentlemen whirl within the prison-like walls of a great modern factory dedicated to mass production and profit. Throughout, also, there is a constant contrapuntal interplay of regimentation and human fallibility, efficiency and impulse. The winking of an eye, a fluttering handkerchief, a flower; any one of these can—and does in M. Clair's gay world—set a whole system at naught.

But just as surely and just as gaily the system sets at naught all human values. For M. Clair's irony is complete and impartial. The flowers and birds with which he elicits human longing are invariably paper flowers and music-box birds. Without a word he implies that the workers who own the factory which turns out phonographs and profits endlessly without their help may find dancing and fishing a little tiresome. Finally, at the end, he catches the former factory-owner, who is "free" once more to roam with his friend, looking wistfully after a passing limousine. Yet M. Clair is no cynic. Cynicism, like pessimism, presupposes the possibility of perfection. Because M. Clair entertains no such possibility, except perhaps in the field of art, his gaiety is pure, entirely devoid either of morals or malice.

MARGARET MARSHALL

Drama

FEW of our musical comedies could bear revival after five years so well as "*Show Boat*" does, now at the Casino (that was once the Earl Carroll) Theater. To be sure, Florenz Ziegfeld has stinted nothing to make the revival a handsome one: there is the same Joseph Urban scenery, and most of the original cast—including Helen Morgan with her old plaintiveness and Charles Winninger with his ancient gusto; and the two substitutions—Dennis King as Gaylord Ravenal and Paul Robeson as Joe—are better than the originals. Robeson, in particular, brings a rich sonority and even a sort of racial significance to the singing of "Ol' Man River." But what is most remarkable about "*Show Boat*" is that neither its humor nor its sentiment has dated. Perhaps this is because "*Show Boat*" to begin with was a historical operetta, and so the sentiment in it was already dated intentionally. That sentiment is thick and unblushing; but the great virtue of "*Show Boat*" is that one emerges from it at least temporarily convinced that in a musical play of its type that is exactly what such sentiment should be.

H. H.